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Arabs to meet on E. Europe

Arab states' ambassadors will meet in Tunis Tuesday at the request of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to discuss developments in Eastern Europe, an Arab League spokesman said Friday. The meeting would specifically discuss "hostile media campaigns and the Zionist exploitation of events to create an atmosphere of tension in Arab states." Several Arab states have accused pro-Israeli forces of spreading rumours that Arabs were fighting in Romania alongside supporters of executed President Nicolae Ceausescu. The PLO, Libya, Syria and the Arab League have dismissed the rumours. Arab states are concerned by the gradual rapprochement between Israel and the countries of Eastern Europe, traditionally close diplomatic allies of the Arab World. The Arab League hailed the new Romanian government Friday, two days after calling on authorities in Bucharest to halt a wave of arrests against Arabs. In a message to the National Salvation Committee governing the central European country, Arab League Secretary-General Ghazi Khatib pledged "solidarity with our Romanian friends, their courage and their maturity."

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Body explodes in Khartoum

PARIS (AP) — The body of a French aid worker killed when a relief flight was shot down over Sudan exploded at the Khartoum airport just before being loaded on a plane for Paris, a medical agency reported Friday. "It was not an accident, but we don't know whether it was the responsibility of an organised movement or an individual," said Dr. Rony Braunman, president of the non-governmental aid organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders). Three French relief workers and a Sudanese colleague died Dec. 21 when their twin-engine aircraft was shot down over the war-torn southern city of Aweil. The bodies were flown back to Khartoum Thursday, with the three Frenchmen transported on two trucks to an aircraft chartered by the Swiss-based International Committee of the Red Cross to return them to Paris. "Our people in one of the trucks heard a small explosion and then the body just started to burn," Braunman said. "It burned the whole truck. One of our local employees broke his arm when he fell on the tarmac to get away." Medical personnel at the scene did not believe the explosion was caused by a buildup of natural gases and feared the body had been booby-trapped to go off in flight.

Badran poised to clinch House vote

Jordan Times Staff Writers

AMMAN — While few observers doubt that the government of Mudar Badran will secure a sound vote of confidence in the Lower House of Parliament in Saturday's session, the questions that remained unanswered Friday were over the actual number of votes that would be cast in favour of the government and how long the session would take before taking the vote.

Predictions of votes in favour of the government ranged from a minimum of 55 to an optimistic 65. According to sources close to the various blocs in the House, all groupings have "freed their respective members to vote for or against the government based on individual judgement" rather than a "unified voice." However, the possibility that at least seven to 10 deputies abstaining from the vote was a strong possibility, other sources said.

Notwithstanding the expected outcome of the vote, every observer expected a tough debate on the floor on the government's programme.

particularly issues related to economy, foreign debts and unemployment as well as rising prices. Economists noted that the 1990 budget has not made provisions for public sector wage increases or reduced government expenditure in real terms.

According to informed Parliament sources, "almost every deputy has indicated his desire to air his views on the government and its programme" during Saturday's session. This puts the House speaker, Suleiman Arar, in a rather tricky situation. Even if he opts to grant 10 minutes of floor time to each deputy, it would mean at least an entire day of speeches, with the confidence vote coming sometime in the late hours of Saturday or early Sunday. "I will not be surprised if the deputies will have their lunch and dinner at the Parliament building," commented a Jordanian diplomat.

"One of the options available to Arar is to strike a deal with the deputies that one or two members speak on behalf of six or eight others with similar views," commented a Parli-

ment watcher. "But the question is: will the deputies agree to such an arrangement, particularly when they are conscious that the watchful eyes of their constituencies would be riveted on them, anxiously to see what they have to say about Badran's programme of action."

"Above everything, it is doubtful that any deputy would agree not to exercise this opportunity, the first-ever for every member of the House, to air his views and reaffirm his positions to his constituency and the electorate at large," he added.

In any case, the decision by the blocs, led by the 22-member Muslim Brotherhood, which was expected by many observers to vote against Badran in protest against its exclusion from the government, to leave it to its individual members to extend or hold back their confidence from the government has ruled out the presentation of group views in concise speeches on the floor by deputies.

Few observers disagree that the actions that preceded and followed Badran's presentation of his programme to the Lower

House two weeks ago have gone a long way in further boosting popular confidence that "the government means business," and reaffirmed that the Kingdom was indeed on the verge of a new democratic era.

"The prime minister has left very little for the deputies to complain about at this point in time," was the observation of a veteran former Jordanian diplomat. "In more ways than one, Badran showed that he was closer to the pulse of the people than some of the deputies themselves," said the diplomat who preferred anonymity. "He kept himself several steps ahead of the House and, in a way, he has cornered the deputies."

The reference was to recent moves by the government to free political detainees, tighten the battle to snuff out corruption and mismanagement, return all seized passports and lift all bans on travel and work, and reinstate the old management of the three major newspaper establishments in the country. The steps were crowned this week with another decision which dramatically curbed the

jurisdiction of military courts in what was seen as a major move towards abolishing martial law.

According to some sources, some of the deputies who will definitely support Badran in Saturday's vote might also raise some "reservations" over some members of the Cabinet.

In any event, said a political analyst, "the government faces tough scrutiny every step of its way even after having secured the vote of confidence." He argues that many deputies will give their vote to Badran, "if only because of pressure from their own constituencies, which, having seen some of the most striking political concessions ever being made by the Badran government, will be furious if they hold back confidence from Badran."

A downtown grocer, Abu Mohammad, agreed. "We are witnessing a new era in our history. It was initiated under the government of Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker but gave a definite shape and colour by Badran. The deputies would better give time to Badran to proceed and do much more. Otherwise they will have a tough time with us."

Thousands of Ceausescu diehards rounded up

BUCHAREST (Agencies) — Thousands of members of the despised secret police have surrendered or been captured in the week since Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu was overthrown, Romania's provisional leadership said Friday.

The prisoners include some generals and high-ranking officers from the security force, known as the Securitate, Deputy Foreign Minister Corneliu Bogdan said. The total number was not immediately disclosed.

Several hundred headline holdouts remain at large in defiance of the government's ultimatum to surrender or die, said Cazimir Ionescu, a vice president of the National Salvation Front.

Sporadic gunbattles continued in Bucharest and other cities and the country's new leaders said they still faced assassination threats from renegade gunmen, but did not fear a counter-coup.

The National Salvation Front's 145 members were being transported for their safety in armoured troop carriers, and Defence Minister General Nicolae Militaru issued a final demand for loyalty to Ceausescu to surrender or face death by military firing squad.

"The situation is calm although there is still some fighting," Militaru, named to the Defence Ministry Thursday, told Bucharest Radio.

He said sporadic gunbattles were continuing in Bucharest and other Romanian cities.

Vice-President Ionescu told a news conference secret police gunmen still posed a threat, but he ruled out a counter-coup.

He added that the front's 145 members, being moved about in armoured troop carriers, were definitely assassination targets.

Fierce Amal-Hizbollah war rages in S. Lebanon

BEIRUT (R) — Fierce street-to-street battles raged between rival Shiite gunmen in South Lebanon Friday in defiance of Iranian efforts to halt a bloody conflict for leadership of the country's largest sect.

Security sources said fighters of the two-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) and the Syrian-backed Amal militias launched attacks and counter-attacks in the villages of Kfar Hitti and Kfar Miki under artillery and mortar cover.

Wounded lay in the streets of the battlezone where civilians were also trapped, according to residents who managed to flee areas close to the frontline Friday.

An Iranian-brokered ceasefire aimed at ending the violence in the Iqlim Al Futah area, 40 kilometres south of Beirut, barely took hold Wednesday and fighting has since raged with little letup.

Hospital sources said at least two people were killed and five wounded in Friday's battles, raising the toll from to at least 52 dead and 205 wounded.

After five hours of fighting Friday there was no change in the positions of either side, the secur-

Several thousand Securitate secret police officers had been arrested but hundreds still remained at large, he said.

"It is not their numbers that matter, it is the quality of their training and their weapons that are important."

Western diplomats said the elite anti-terrorist USLA security police force posed a particular threat. It numbered some 2,000 members under the Ceausescu regime.

Ceausescu and his wife Elena were toppled from power last week and executed Monday, Christmas Day, by an army firing squad.

The National Salvation Front is a collection of intellectuals, Communists and others that took power Dec. 22 when Ceausescu fell in a popular uprising backed by the army. It had given security police members until Thursday to surrender or face execution, but sporadic shooting continued well after the deadline.

In Paris Friday, front member Silviu Brucan, a former Romanian ambassador to Washington, was quoted in the Le Monde newspaper as saying that some of the holdout security police sharpshooters with infrared telescope sights on their weapons are trying to pick off Romania's revolutionary leaders.

The front's ruling council has assumed sweeping powers, changed the country's name from Socialist Republic of Romania to Romania and ordered the Communist emblem removed from the national flag, the state news agency Agerpres reported. It also promised free elections next year.

For the past week, Romanians have waved the blue, yellow and red flag with the emblem ripped out.

Only then the movement will abide by the ceasefire," said Berri.

But a fundamentalist source said Hizbollah would not pull out before direct talks began between both groups.

Hizbollah Secretary General Sheikh Soubhi Tounfeli told a news conference in Beirut's southern suburbs Friday the fighting would continue until Amal accepted unconditional talks.

"I had hoped to read to you today an agreement to end the fighting between Amal and us. But I regret to say such an accord has not been accomplished yet," Tounfeli said.

"Amal should stop the war and declare a ceasefire and sit down (for talks) to solve all the problems."

"If it doesn't do that, Amal will be responsible for the displacement of people, the killing of children and the destruction of homes," Tounfeli said.

He said Hizbollah would not withdraw from its newly-captured positions before a ceasefire was in place and talks with Amal had begun.

Kaddoumi accuses U.S. of trickery

KUWAIT (AP) — A ranking Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official accused Washington in an interview published Friday of trickery in its dealings with the PLO.

Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's foreign affairs department, told the newspaper Al Anba: "The United States is being tricky."

"Apparently there is an attempt to bypass the Palestinian role which is unacceptable to the PLO... the sole representative of the Palestinian people," he said.

Kaddoumi reiterated that the PLO had set conditions for agreeing to a Palestinian-Israeli dialogue as suggested by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in October.

"As head of the Palestinian diplomacy, I declare we did not accept the Baker plan, but rather we presented clarifications for conducting dialogue with Israel."

The PLO has formally responded to Baker's plan, demanding that it choose the Palestinian team to the dialogue and that the agenda for the meeting be open, not restricted to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's election plan.

Israel rejects any PLO involvement in the peace process and insists that the dialogue be limited to discussion of the election plan.

Kaddoumi said the PLO "has nothing to do" with a meeting in Washington next month between Baker and the foreign ministers of Egypt and Israel to discuss the Middle East peace process.

Responding to a question, Kaddoumi said he was opposed to a new mediation by Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson to narrow the gap with Washington.

Andersson was instrumental last year in bringing PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to openly renounce terrorism and recognise Israel's right to exist, prompting Washington to open a dialogue with the PLO, ending a 13-year ban on dealings with the movement.

"I am not convinced of the role played by Andersson. There was a violent conversation between me and him recently when I explained to him the American attitude, and he felt I was casting doubt on the role he was playing," Kaddoumi said.

Andersson tries to conduct good offices but he apparently is not aware of the American tricks. As a Palestinian, I know them very well."

Asked about the recent changes in Eastern Europe, Kaddoumi said the PLO was adopting "a wait-and-see attitude to know the extent of the changes in the political structure of those countries."

(Continued on page 3)

Israeli police violently break up march for peace

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Police fired teargas, pulled demonstrators by their hair and struck them with night sticks to break up a peace march in Jerusalem Friday by more than 3,000 Israeli, Palestinian and European women.

The hour-long procession from West Jerusalem to East Jerusalem was without incident until the end, when a Palestinian flag was raised and police moved in to disperse the marchers.

Police said that 16 people were detained, and reporters saw police drag several women away by their hair or clothes. Some were struck with night sticks, and several were kicked.

The women's march was part of a programme organised by

peace activists that will culminate Saturday with 1,200 visiting Europeans expected to link hands with Israelis and Palestinians in a "human chain" around Jerusalem's Old City.

The "1990 — Time for Peace" demonstration Saturday is intended to symbolise the unity of peace activists who endorse a negotiated Middle East peace settlement.

Israeli and foreign women marching from West Jerusalem linked up with Palestinian women outside the walls of the Old City, then headed for an Arab cultural centre in Arab Jerusalem.

They carried banners denouncing Israel's 22-year occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and calling for the establishment

of an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel.

The march passed through the main business district in Arab Jerusalem where stores were shuttered due to a daily afternoon strike called by leaders of the two-year-old Palestinian uprising.

Israeli police sprayed demonstrators with teargas and punched and grappled with some of them after several Palestinians waiting at the centre raised the Palestinian flag.

"If they do this to us foreigners, one can imagine how they treat those who live here," said Lucia, 35, an Italian woman who refused to give her full name.

Israeli parliament member Mohammad Mi'ari, attending the rally at the cultural centre, said

police had unmasked their true face before world delegations.

"We were told this is the first time so many Israelis and Palestinians were on the streets. This is a big success," said Tom Benetolito, an Italian organiser of the demonstration.

An adviser to right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir condemned the peace activists Friday and accused European participants of being "tool of the enemy."

"It is a demonstration against Israel, against peace and it will not help these people of the so-called Peace Now group or their imported collaborators from abroad," Yossi Ahimeir, Shamir's bureau chief, told Reuters.

Vatican slams U.S. but says it is asking Noriega to leave

VATICAN CITY (Agencies) — The Vatican Friday called the United States an "occupying power" in Panama and angrily rejected demands that the Holy See's embassy hand over ousted dictator Manuel Antonio Noriega.

But chief Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls said the Holy See was trying to persuade Noriega, wanted in the United States on drug charges, to leave the Panama City embassy of his own free will.

Navigo said the United States had no right to demand the handover of Noriega and also slammed psychological warfare by U.S. invasion troops who have been blasting the embassy with loud rock music. He said this was a "very serious matter" unacceptable under international law.

Noriega, who was Panama Defence Forces (PDF) chief and Panama's de facto ruler until last week's U.S. attack toppled him, sought refuge in the Vatican embassy on Christmas Eve.

Navigo told a Friday news briefing the Vatican has still not received a formal request from the new Panamanian government that it turn over Noriega.

The United States has demanded that the Vatican order Noriega expelled from the papal nunciature, so it can bring him to the United States to stand trial on drug trafficking charges.

But the Vatican has insisted the embassy has no legal basis for turning Noriega over to U.S. forces because, under accepted international procedures, an embassy is only empowered to deal with the government of the host country.

U.S. forces have surrounded the mission and conducted a campaign of harassment, searching

people leaving the compound, shooting out streetlights and blasting rock music from a loudspeaker in the street.

"The nuncio is doing his best to convince General Noriega to abandon the nunciature on his own, by himself," Navarro said. "At the same time he cannot force Noriega to leave nor can he consign him to U.S. forces."

It was the first time the Vatican said publicly it was trying to persuade Noriega to leave.

"Certainly General Noriega is not living in a hotel," Navarro joked. "So one day or another he must leave."

In Panama City, a veteran Israeli intelligence expert and three other close aides to Noriega have been arrested by U.S. troops, but the general remained inside the Vatican embassy Friday.

Life returned to normal in much of Panama City Thursday. The government of President Guillermo Endara, who took office after the U.S. invasion, reopened banks and paid public employees. It also lifted news media restrictions imposed by the Noriega government.

A senior U.S. embassy official said that 14,000 U.S. troops sent to Panama in the Dec. 20 invasion likely will stay beyond February while Endara reassembles a security force.

The U.S. Southern Command said 23 U.S. soldiers and two dependents were killed and 322 Americans were wounded during the invasion. It said 297 Panamanian soldiers were killed and 123 wounded.

A U.S. embassy official said about 300 Panamanian civilians died in the fighting.

On Thursday, U.S. forces arrested Michel Harari, a former

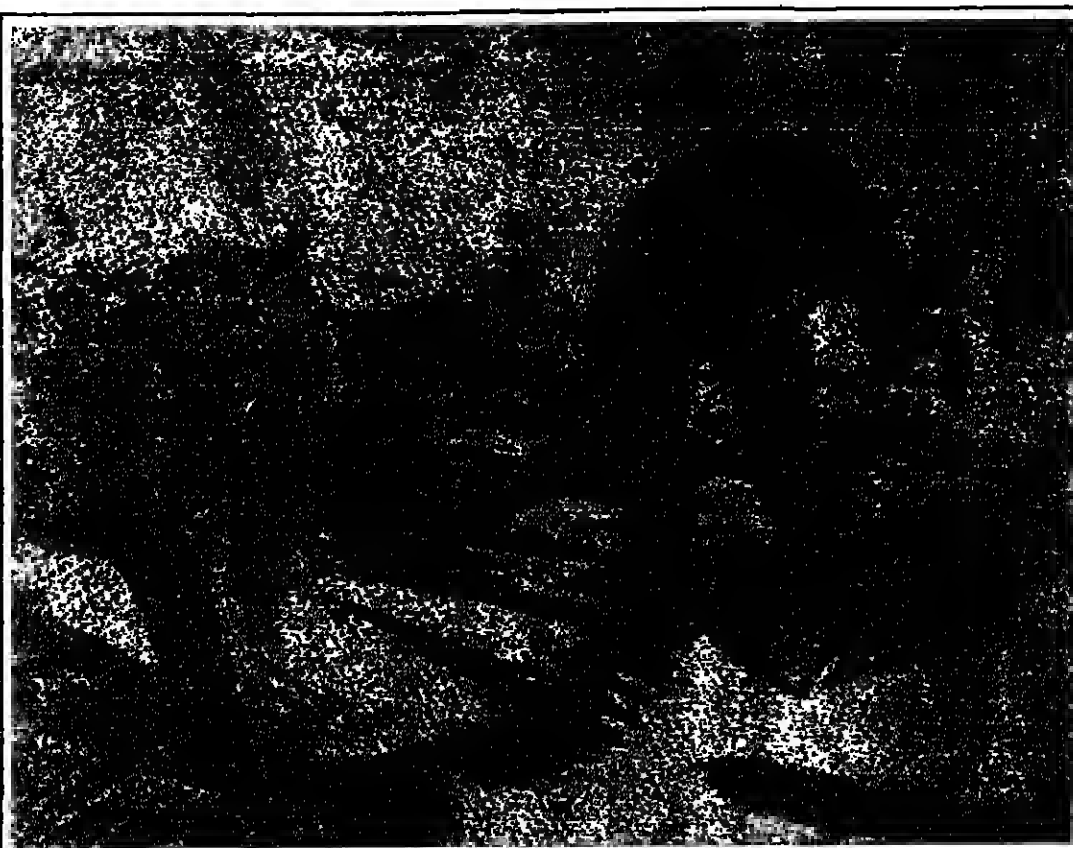
2 Americans found killed

NEW YORK (R) — Two Americans in Panama were kidnapped and killed with single shots to the back of the head and their bodies were unearthed Friday near the Vatican embassy where Manuel Noriega is holed up. U.S. radio and television reports said.

They said the two men, one in his twenties, the other in his forties, had been abducted from their apartments near the Vatican embassy in Panama City either before or during last week's U.S. invasion. Both were civilians and the older one was employed by the U.S. Defence Department, the reports said.

U.S. forces invaded Panama on Dec. 20 in an attempt to arrest Noriega and bring him back to the United States to stand trial on drug trafficking charges. The ousted Panamanian strongman eluded capture and entered the papal nunciature on Christmas Eve.

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ANOTHER ROUND: Two Shi'ite Muslim Amal militiamen pack hundreds of heavy machine-gun bullets at the village of Kfar Fila in South Lebanon in preparation for an attack on the position of pro-Iranian Muslim militants in the opposite side of the village. Dozens have been killed in the bloody battles for the control of a strategic area in south Lebanon.

Fighting rages in Ethiopia

NAIROBI (AP) — Fighting has intensified in northern Ethiopia where rebels claim to have seized three towns and are battling government troops along a highway, according to Western diplomats.

In the last 10 days, the rebel Tigre People's Liberation Front (TPLF) has claimed to have seized the garrison town of Debre Tabor in northwestern Gonder province as well as the towns of Rabel and Mehal Meda in Shoa province.

The battles, the insurgents claim, cost the government nearly 3,000 dead, wounded or captured soldiers.

Diplomats in Addis Ababa say the claims appear to be true and that the rebels now are in control of the 40-kilometre road from Debre Tabor to Lake Tana, source of the Blue Nile.

They say the rebels also are continuing their southern push in Shoa and are battling government troops along the main north-south highway around Debre Sine, 160 kilometres northeast of Addis Ababa.

"It obviously looks like things are heating up," said one of the diplomats, all of whom spoke in telephone interviews from Addis Ababa and requested anonymity. "But what's going to happen, no one knows."

The rebels claimed the battle for Debre Tabor, whose garrison had been reinforced to the strength of 10,000 to 15,000 troops, was the beginning of a government counteroffensive to drive the TPLF back from gains made since starting its push in August.

However, the diplomats were doubtful this was the case. "I don't think we're looking at much of a government counteroffensive at all, if they're even capable of making one," said one diplomat. "The government hasn't succeeded in pushing them back to any degree."

The source said President Mengistu Haile Mariam's army, disorganised and dispirited after an abortive army-led coup attempt in May, had been reinforced by hundreds of thousands of poorly trained conscripts "of dubious quality."

"I think the best they might be able to do is hold the rebels in position," he said.

The Tigre rebels began their push four months ago after joining forces with a smaller rebel

group, the Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement (EPDM). They now control all of their home province of Tigre and have made significant advances into Tigre's southern neighbour, Wollo. In the last two months they also have moved into Gonder and Shoa provinces.

"They've proven to be much stronger, much more coherent than they were believed to be several months ago," said one of the diplomats. "They've basically rolled over one government position after another."

The Tigre rebels, who have been fighting for 14 years to topple Mengistu's Marxist government, are Marxists themselves. They say they want a government modelled after Albania's harsh Stalinist-Leninist rule.

The government and the TPLF have held two rounds of preliminary peace talks, the last of which ended Dec. 19 in Rome with both sides agreeing to meet in March. However, the peace talks "don't appear to be going very far now," said a diplomat who pointed out that the latest offensive began immediately after the negotiating sessions ended.

He said there was a lot of speculation in the capital that the Tigre rebels had launched their attacks in Gonder.

Egypt-Syria ties draw mixed Israeli reaction

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir says that Syria's reconciliation with Egypt does not signal an end to its desire to "destroy" the Zionist state.

"The hostility continues. Preparation continues for the day when war will look possible to them. The purchase of weapons continues, so let us not celebrate before due time," Shamir told a gathering of supporters from his right-wing Likud bloc Thursday.

Left-leaning politicians and some analysts said, however, that Syria's reconciliation with the Arab state to have a peace treaty with Israel was a positive sign.

Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak agreed Wednesday to restore diplomatic relations after a 12-year rift caused by Egypt's decision to enter peace negotiations with Israel.

"It's not that Mubarak accepted Assad's conditions, but Assad accepted those of Mubarak," Vice-Premier and Finance Minister Shimon Peres said on Israel Radio.

Peres attributed the change in Syria's position, which had previously refused to renew ties with Egypt as long as the Israeli flag flew over Cairo, to the "tremendous changes" occurring in Eastern Europe and predicted the kind of political upheavals there would occur in the Middle East as well.

Hebrew University professor Moshe Maoz, an expert on Syria, said Assad agreed to renew ties with Egypt because the Syrian leader felt it could help him break out of his isolation in the Arab World and regain the occupied Golan Heights.

"The idea of Syria becoming more moderate towards Israel is nice, but Syria won't do it for nothing. It will demand something in return — and this will no doubt be the Golan Heights," Maoz said on Israel Radio.

Maoz said he believed Syria may try to link the political process with the Palestinians to the Golan Heights, which he believes would probably get the support of Egypt, other Middle Eastern countries as well as the Soviet Union and the international community.

"The moment there is an Israel-Palestinian arrangement supported by Egypt, Jordan and maybe Iraq, Syria will remain in the cold," Maoz said. "By mak-

ing an alliance with Egypt, it guarantees that Egypt would look to its interests too."

"Both the United States and the Soviet Union are interested in reconciliation in the Middle East and it might bring some pressure to bear on both their allies or clients to do it," he said on Israel Radio.

But Shamir also hinted Thursday that he would not hesitate to go to national elections should the "peace process" push for the formula of trading land for peace, something Shamir's Likud bloc strongly opposes and Peres's Labour Party supports.

"I cannot say that in some corner of my heart there are no fears," said parliamentarian Elisha Ben-Elissar, Israel's first ambassador to Cairo. "In the short term, it is good, but we will keep a close eye on it."

Israeli analysts and government officials welcomed the resumption of Egyptian-Syrian ties as a victory for Cairo's moderation over Damascus' hardline policies.

"There is no doubt that this is Egypt's most outstanding achievement," said Ben-Elissar. Former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance said after meeting Assad this month that Syria no longer wanted to play the spoiler in efforts to convene Palestinian-Israeli peace talks.

Cairo has tried to arrange such negotiations, playing the broker between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). "What could happen in the next stage is that Syria will signal it is prepared to join the process," said Professor Itamar Rabinovich of Tel Aviv University.

Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin was quoted as saying the Syrian-Egyptian rapport could reduce Syria's hostility towards Israel but could also be dangerous for the Zionist state.

Libyan envoy in Syria

In Damascus, President Assad met with Libya's defence minister Thursday.

The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA) said Colonel Abu Bakr Younis, the secretary-general of Libya's Popular Defence Committee, delivered a letter to Assad from Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi.

The agency did not release details of the letter or of the talks.

Kuwaitis warned against gatherings

NICOSIA (R) — The Kuwaiti government, in an apparent bid to contain growing agitation for the revival of a democratic parliament, has warned Kuwaitis against holding unauthorised meetings.

An Interior Ministry statement published Friday said people had been abusing the traditional "diwanis", popular gatherings in private homes where men discuss a wide-range of topics from politics to culture and entertainment.

It warned Kuwaitis to obey the law and not let the meetings be used in ways that violate the age-old custom of private diwanis.

Travellers from Kuwait have spoken of growing demands for democracy at weekly gatherings after the refusal of the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Hamad Al Sabah, so far to receive a petition for the recall of the parliament suspended in 1986.

Sources in the region said that the question of greater democracy was raised at a summit meeting this month of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which discussed the implications for the region of change in Eastern Europe.

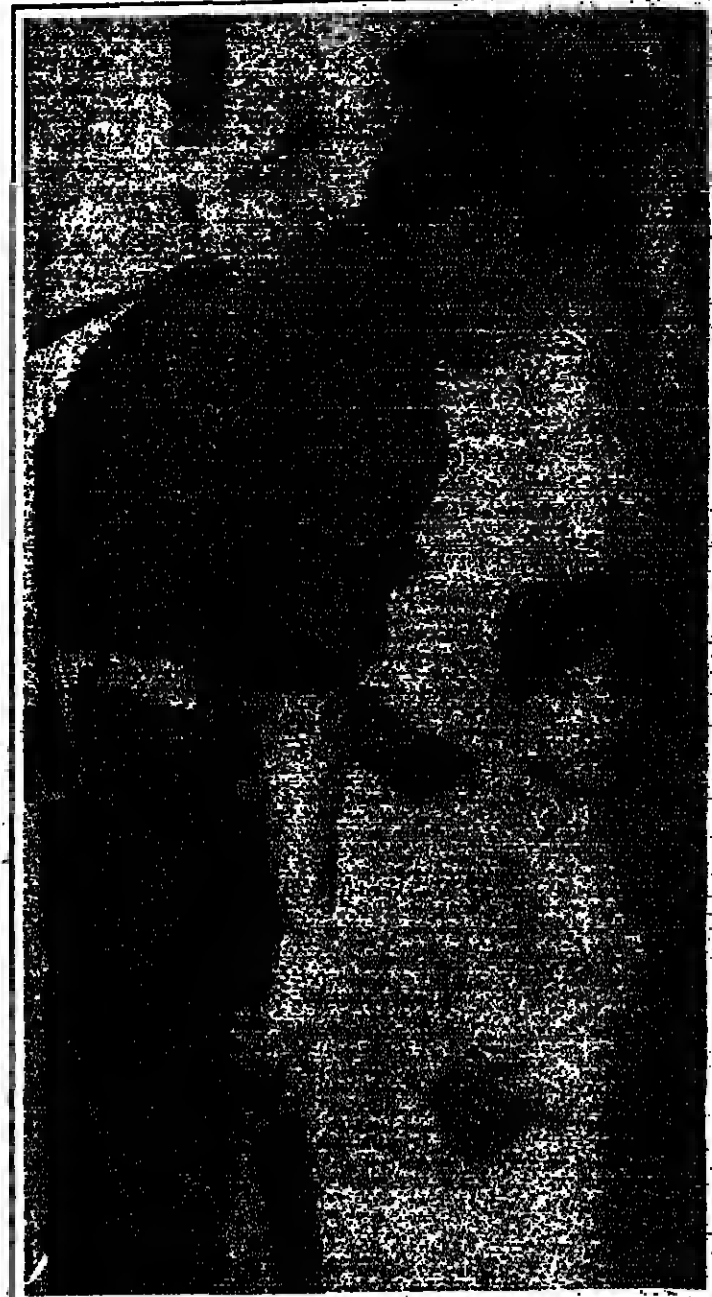
The summit was attended by Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates but the sources said there was no sign that Kuwait would bow to the demands for a revival of its parliament.

Bahrain is the only other GCC state to have had a parliament. This was dissolved in 1975.

The last Kuwait diwaniya Dec. 25 is said to have attracted up to 2,000 people. The travellers said that although no meeting was planned for the coming week due to the new year holiday, invitations had been issued for a diwaniya the following week.

The biggest gathering was reported Dec. 18 when up to 5,000 people were said to have met in the sanctity of a large mosque after police broke up a private diwaniya the previous week attended by some 2,000 people.

But a senior member of the ruling family, Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, was reported to have told some of those present that such strong-arm methods would not be repeated.



'SECURITY': An Israeli policeman lets a Palestinian child enter Manger Square in the occupied West Bank town of Bethlehem after checking him with a metal detector.

Iranian radicals agree to bury rift

NICOSIA (AP) — Several radical Iranian groups opposed to the pragmatic cabinet of President Hashemi Rafsanjani Thursday agreed to keep their bickering under wraps, following a stern warning by the country's spiritual leader, Tehran Radio reported.

The broadcast, monitored in Nicosia, said that the radical Society of Combatant Theologians, the Islamic Propagation Society and another group of theologians who in recent weeks had been openly attacking Rafsanjani's government, agreed that such bickering "played into the hands of the enemy."

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's spiritual leader, said in a speech Wednesday that infighting "not in the interests of the Islamic republic."

The power struggle between the country's so-called radical and pragmatic leaders surfaced last week when Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati's office was subject to a broad attack believed orchestrated by the radicals.

Velayati's ministry was lambasted for arranging the visit to Tehran earlier this month for the late Romanian leader Nicolae Ceausescu at a time when his people were rising against him.

Ceausescu was deposed by a popular uprising Dec. 22 and he and his wife Elena were executed Monday Dec. 25 after they were found guilty during a secret military trial of genocide and "grave crimes" during his tyrannical 24-year rule.

The uprising against Ceausescu began a few hours before he left for Tehran Dec. 18.

Editorials in the Iranian papers after Ceausescu's execution accused the Foreign Ministry of having committed a grave error, and used it to discredit Velayati. The official Islamic Republic

News Agency, also monitored in Nicosia, said the issue of Ceausescu's visit was "snowballing as the biggest goof of the Iranian foreign ministry."

The radical-dominated Majlis, or parliament, summoned Velayati to explain Ceausescu's visit.

"The Majlis foreign relations committee, after meeting with Velayati, said his answers to their questions 'were not satisfactory enough.'"

Khamenei stepped in and his heated bickering to diffuse the situation, affirming his confidence in Velayati.

He warned "uninformed leaders who have access to the media" not to abuse this privilege.

The radical Combatant Theologian Society issued a statement Thursday supporting Khamenei's remarks and adding that such acts were a "great, unforgivable sin."

The statement added that Khamenei's advice "was like the guidance of the imam."

Iranians refer to the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the founder of the Islamic republic, as imam or supreme spiritual leader.

Khomeini frequently intervened to check the power struggle between the radicals and the pragmatists, but this was the first time Khamenei had delivered such a warning.

The radicals oppose Rafsanjani's ambitious economic policies to patch up rifts with the West and attract foreign investment to invigorate the country's sluggish economy.

The leader of the radical camp, former Interior Minister Ali Akbar Mohtashemi, was dumped by Rafsanjani when he formed his cabinet last August.

Badr assassination bid raises concern in Egypt

By Neila Sammakia
The Associated Press

CAIRO — Although a truck-bomb explosion that missed the government minister in charge of security was said by experts to be amateurish, they also fear it heralds a rise in extremism.

They also say it suggests that Muslim fundamentalists are taking tips in terror from groups in other countries. The explosion Dec. 16, apparently an attempt on the life of Interior Minister Zaki Badr, was the first vehicle bomb in Egypt.

"The idea is imported but lacks expertise," said a researcher who follows Muslim fundamentalist activism for a Western embassy.

"I don't think it was Jihad, because Jihad would have done it right. They have some military experience. But this could incite others to follow suit. And it means there's an escalation in the confrontation."

Jihad, which has no known connection with the Islamic Jihad group in Lebanon, masterminded the October 1981 assassination of

President Anwar Sadat and was implicated in a failed coup attempt immediately afterwards.

Experts estimate there are about 150,000 Islamic activists in Egypt, arrayed in groups under the umbrella label of Al Gamaa Al Islamiya, the Islamic group. About 10 per cent of them are thought to consider violence acceptable to attain their goals.

Generally, they and hundreds of thousands more fundamentalists in the older, more moderate but outlawed Muslim Brotherhood demand implementation of Sharia. The government claims 90 per cent of the law already encompasses Sharia and that it's working to change the rest.

The Brotherhood, by far the largest fundamentalist group, was born in Egypt in 1928. It turned to violence in the late 1940s, assassinating Prime Minister Mahmoud Fahmy Al Nokrashy in 1948. Each of the next two decades had spurts of religious-hated violence and government suppression.

Shortly before his death, Sadat began a crackdown on fundamentalism. It has continued at

greater or lesser levels since, the longest period of sustained government-fundamentalist trouble.

Badr, who in 1986 became the minister in charge of security, ranks among the most iron-fisted campaigners against militant Muslims. He often uses emergency laws in force since Sadat's death to detain suspects and to rearrest them when courts order their release.

"The government suppresses fundamentalists, so they resort to violence," said the Western researcher, who refused to be identified by name or nationality. "Most of the militants are educated, students. They're open to new ideas. But this (attack on Badr) didn't work, because they didn't have enough experience."

Ibrahim Nafei, editor-in-chief of the state-run newspaper Al-Ahram, suggested foreign influence in the truck-bombing.

"Why this new method? Does this mean the plot was hatched abroad and executed here in this primitive way?" questioned Nafei, a confidant of President Hosni Mubarak.

Some experts estimate that

during certain periods in the past year, jails held as many as 6,000 militant fundamentalists at a time.

The fact that the attempt on Badr's life came only five days after violent unrest in the southern city of Assiut, in which at least 40 people were injured, aroused scepticism among some people, even non-fundamentalists.

Police arrested a man fleeing the pickup truck as the rear part of it blew up. The relatively small explosion reportedly was caused by gunpowder detonated by batteries connected to a key near the ignition.

The attorney general, Egypt's chief prosecutor, banned news stories about the investigation. But reports published before the blackout said the suspect was Gamal Mohammad Mustafa, 26, a medical student at Assiut university who hails from Fayyum.

Assiut and Fayyum, both in southern Egypt, are known as centres of Muslim fundamentalist agitation.

Security sources said 17 other students, mostly Mustafa's

friends who live in Assiut and who come from the Fayyum area, were arrested. The sources said Mustafa had been arrested previously, in connection with an attack by Muslim militants on a mixed-sex party at Assiut University in 1988.

Omar Abdel Rahman, the alleged spiritual leader of Jihad whom courts cleared twice of links to Sadat's killing and the subsequent coup attempt, often has been at odds with Badr's police.

Although he is under house arrest at his home in Fayyum, he was in Cairo attending a court session the day the minister was targeted. "We consider the explosion a plot by police to attack Muslims and tell people, 'you see what they're doing,'" Abdel Rahman told the Associated Press.

Mohammad Habib, an Assiut University professor and member of parliament who belongs to the Brotherhood, claimed Badr "exploited it to give a general impression that he's in danger so as to win over public opinion."

The Brotherhood has tried to spread its message by joining the



Zaki Badr

Egyptian body politic. The so-called Islamic Trend, mostly Brotherhood members, dominates many professional associations, such as those for medicine and engineering.

But despite claims such as Habib's of growing moderation, other commentators fear the worst.

"We thought terrorism had subsided ... but the incident shows the terrorist flame has not been extinguished," wrote columnist Ahmad Bahaeddin in Al-Ahram.

"On the contrary, it persists and is taking new directions."

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77111-19	
PROGRAMME ONE	
15:30	Koran
15:45	Programme review
15:55	Children programme
16:00	Educational programme
16:05	News summary
16:10	Message from Iraq
16:15	A play by Shakespeare
16:20	Local programme
16:25	Programme review
16:30	News in Arabic
16:35	Arabic series
16:40	Programme review
16:45	Consumer's guide
16:50	Local programme
16:55	News in English
17:00	Feature film
PROGRAMME TWO	
17:30	Variety programme
17:45	News in French
17:50	Documentary
17:55	News in Arabic
18:00	Natural phenomena
18:05	News in Arabic
18:10	Annie McGuire
18:15	Local programme
18:20	Classical music
18:25	News in English
18:30	Feature film
PRAYER TIMES	
05:00	Fajr
06:30	(Sunrise) Dhuha
11:30	Dhuhr
12:23	'Asr
16:46	Maghreb

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR	
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swellish, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 627440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrassants Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628343	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 771331	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 683326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 612295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be warm and some clouds appear at different altitudes. Winds will be southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS	
NIGHT DUTY	
AMMAN:	
Dr. Issam Abu Riaz	681967
Dr. Mohammad Iman	639999
Dr. Othman Mustafa	774024
Dr. Zein Zaghoul	638591
Firas pharmacy	661912
Ferdous pharmacy	778336
Al Asena pharmacy	637055
Nairokh pharmacy	626672
Al Salom pharmacy	636730
Yasoun pharmacy	644945
Shamsian pharmacy	637660
IRBID:	
Dr. Anwar Obaidat	(—)
EMERGENCIES	
Al Sharras' pharmacy	(985238)
ZARQA:	
Dr. Yousef Abu Saad	989000
Khalifah pharmacy	985417
HOSPITALS	
AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	81381/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Ama	64281/6
Akhil Maternity, J. Ama	64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Mahbas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shamsian	6641714
Shamsian Hospital	669131
University Hospital	845845
Al-Musabir Hospital	66727/9
The Islamic, Abdali	66612/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6661548
Al-Bashir, J. Askafish	77101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Askafish	77101/3
Army, Marka	89161/15
Queen Alia Hospital	60224050
Amal Hospital	674155
FOR THE TRAVELLER	
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT	
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.	
ARRIVALS	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:45	Baghdad (RJ)
06:55	Damascus (RJ)
07:15	Aqaba (RJ)
07:20	New Delhi (RJ)
07:30	Cairo (RJ)
07:35	Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
07:40	Dhahran, Kuwait (RJ)
07:45	Cairo (RJ)
07:50	New York, Vienna (RJ)
07:55	Copenhagen, Frankfurt (RJ)
08:00	Tripoli (RJ)
DEPARTURES	
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
08:30	Aqaba, Helsinki (RJ)
08:40	Tripoli (RJ)
08:45	Vienna, Chicago (RJ)
08:50	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
09:00	Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
09:05	London (RJ)
09:10	Paris (RJ)
09:15	Frankfurt, Brussels (RJ)
09:20	Cairo (RJ)
09:25	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
09:30	Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
09:35	Kuwait (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
06:15	Beirut (Ode)
06:25	Cairo (MS)
06:30	Baghdad (IA)
06:35	Riyadh (SV)
06:40	Kuwait (24)
06:45	Doha (AZ)
06:50	Dubai (EK)
MARKET PRICES	
Upper/lower price in fks per kg	
Apple	220 / 230
Banana	250 / 300
Banana (Mukammal)	200 / 250
Beans	280 / 320
Cabbage	120 / 130
Carrot	220 / 180
Cauliflower	200 / 150
Cucumber (large)	200 / 120
Cucumber (small)	150 / 100
Dates	500 / 700
Eggplant	180 / 120
Garlic	300 / 200
Grapefruit	240 / 180
Leemon	200 / 150
Marrow (large)	140 / 100
Marrow (small)	120 / 80
Onion (dry)	240 / 120
Onion (green)	150 / 100
Orange	220 / 150
Orange (Shamoni)	220 /



Representatives of Jordan and the People's Republic of China Thursday sign a cooperation agreement (Petra photo)

Jordan, China sign radio, television cooperation protocol

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and the People's Republic of China Thursday signed a protocol of cooperation in the field of radio and television.

Under the agreement, which was signed at the Ministry of Information, Jordan and China will exchange radio and television programmes on children, culture, sports, arts and national holidays.

The two countries also agreed to exchange visits by radio and television teams and expertise in accordance with a prior agreement. They also agreed to send reporters to cover major events in the two countries in line with arrangements to be made a priori.

The protocol was signed by Director of Jordan Radio and Television Corporation, Radi Al Khas, for the Jordanian side and for the Chinese side by the deputy minister of Chinese Radio, Television and Cinema.

The deputy Chinese minister

and the accompanying delegation Thursday met with Information Minister Ibrahim Izzeddin. They discussed bilateral relations in the information field.

Izzeddin praised China's positions vis-a-vis the Arab causes. He said they are supportive of Arab rights and just Arab causes.

The Chinese deputy minister praised Jordanian policy and lauded His Majesty King Hussein's efforts to find a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Security forces disperse anti-U.S. demonstrators

AMMAN (J.T.) — Public Security Department (PSD) forces Thursday used tear-gas to disperse about 400 demonstrators marching towards the U.S. embassy to protest American support for Israel, according to eyewitnesses quoted by Reuters.

According to a spokesman for the Interior Ministry quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, about 3,000 people who were attending a cultural event at the Royal Cultural Centre assembled outside the theatre and 400 of them began marching towards Abdul Naser circle without obtaining permission from the concerned security departments.

The demonstrators, mostly young people, attacked civilian vehicles and police cars, thus forcing the police to intervene to restore public order, according to the Interior Ministry spokesman. He said no one was injured but windows of some security cars were broken by the protesters.

The spokesman said the Ministry of Interior deplores such "irresponsible acts which are inconsistent with democratic behaviour" and warns those who attempt to tamper with security and public order that legal action will be taken against them. The spokesman said the ministry calls on all citizens to maintain public order.

The marchers Thursday split from a group of about 3,000 people who were attending a concert by the Palestinian group Firqat Balamda (Band of Our Homeland).

Earlier this month, several street marches took place to mark the second anniversary of the Palestinian uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It was the second time this month that pro-Palestinian demonstrators had tried to reach the U.S. embassy.

"We have always told them they were free to march in the streets and shout slogans as long as they do not attack embassies," a senior police officer told Reuters.

The government this week swept away most of the provisions of martial law imposed for 22 years, including those banning large public gatherings.

But organisers of such gatherings are still obliged to inform the Interior Ministry before hand.



Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan is seen off at the airport by Prime Minister Mudar Badran, cabinet ministers and several embassy officials late Thursday after a two-day official visit.

Jordan, Iraq agree to boost cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Thursday received Iraqi First Deputy Premier Taha Yassin Ramadan and his accompanying delegation, who took part in the Joint Higher Jordanian Iraqi Committee's (JHJIC) meetings, which began here Wednesday.

Ramadan conveyed to the King, President Saddam Hussein's greetings. Ramadan and Prime Minister Mudar Badran, head of the Jordanian side at the meetings, briefed King Hussein on the outcome of the committee's meetings and their efforts to enhance bilateral cooperation in all fields.

Ramadan, who is also chairman of a special ministerial committee formed by the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) member state — Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and North Yemen — briefed the King on the ministerial committee's programme and the steps it has taken so far on the path of achieving ACC integration. King Hussein voiced satisfaction with the results the JHJIC has achieved so far.

Later Thursday Ramadan, who headed the Iraqi side to the JHJIC meeting, after a two-day official visit to Jordan.

In a departure statement, Ramadan said he was pleased to have met with the King and discussed with him the results of the JHJIC meetings and issues pertaining to the next ACC summit which will be held here in February.

Ramadan also said the committee was successful in providing all the circumstances necessary to enable both countries to attain further achievements in all fields.

In a press statement at the airport, Prime Minister Badran expressed happiness at Ramadan's visit. He said the visit served as an opportunity to hold discussions at the bilateral and ACC levels. Badran described the discussions as positive and constructive and said they contributed to enhancing cohesion between both countries.

Earlier Thursday, Ramadan and Badran signed minutes of the JHJIC's meetings and the minutes of the 10th session of the Joint Jordanian Iraqi Ministerial Committee.

The two sides set the volume of commercial exchange during the year 1990 at \$800 million. The two parties also agreed to use Aqaba port for Iraqi exports and imports and to give it priority

over other ports.

The two sides also stressed the need for speeding up work on the national electric grids project between both countries as the first step to connecting other countries of the Arab Orient with the Maghreb countries. They also stressed the importance of achieving integration in the fields of transport and recommended the undertaking of a feasibility study on link both countries by railroad. The two sides agreed to hold the next meeting in Baghdad next December.

On the sidelines of the JHJIC's meetings, Minister of Industry and Trade Ziad Fariz and Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications and Acting Finance Minister Mohammad Hamzeh Al Zuhaidi signed minutes of the Joint Jordanian Iraqi Ministerial Committee meetings. The minutes stressed the need for giving priority to trade between the two countries and agreed to hold commercial exhibitions in both countries to give people exposure to the items produced by each country. The minutes highlighted the importance of the industrial coordination and recommended setting up integrated industries in both countries.

ACC youth praise Jordan

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian, Iraqi, Egyptian and Yemeni youths taking part in the first youth gathering of the Arab Cooperation Council (ACC) countries have expressed their admiration of Jordan's democratic principles and thanked Jordanians for their hospitality.

At the conclusion of the gathering, the participants called for supporting the intifada and praised the unity agreement between the Yemens.

The youth stressed the need to provide job opportunities to youth of ACC countries and to curtail influx of foreign labourers. They studied the brain-drain phenomenon in Arab countries and discussed means to solve problems related to Arab youth. Present were delegations representing the ACC countries and the Arab Youth Forum.

PLO

(Continued from page 1)

He added: "The PLO is keen on retaining close links with Eastern European peoples which stood by the Palestinian people."

He repeated charges that Israel was behind allegations that Palestinians, Libyans and Syrians were fighting alongside supporters of executed Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu.

In Tunis, a senior Arab League official accused the United States Friday of abusing detente and said it should rather take the opportunity to end its alliance with Israel.

"Unfortunately the United States is still using developments in the East Bloc to strengthen its previous policies," Adnan Omran, the league's assistant secretary general for political affairs, told Reuters in an interview.

"Events in Panama show that the understanding in Malta did not convince them to adopt peaceful means of addressing problems," he said.

"In fact it seems to have hardened American positions. We hope we are wrong," he added. Omran said that in the Middle East, the United States should respond to changing circumstances by scrapping its strategic alliance with Israel.

"In the past the United States tried to justify the alliance globally in terms of conflict with the Soviet Union, but there is no longer any reason why this alliance should continue."

"They should declare it null and void and that would create a new mood in the Middle East, a positive mood, and clear the way for a more creative dialogue with the Arab states," he said.

"Both sides (supporters) must respect detente. If one superpower is to withdraw and the other to use this to strengthen its position that is not healthy in our view... unless the vacuum is filled by the international community," he added.

Islamic news agency calls for cooperation

BAGHDAD (Petra) — The International Islamic News Agency (IINA) executive council has called for promoting cooperation and integration among Islamic countries in order to confront hostile propaganda.

At the conclusion of its 14th session in Baghdad Friday, the IINA executive council called for highlighting news on the Palestinian intifada and condemned all attempts designed to undermine Saudi sovereignty or interfere in the country's internal affairs. The council expressed pride in Iraq's latest scientific achievement and called for concluding a peace agreement between Iraq and Iran as well as the exchange of prisoners of war.

The council called for ending foreign interference in Lebanon's affairs and applauded Saudi King Fahd's endeavours to realise the Ta'if agreement.

The council also decided to endorse all cooperation agreements the IINA had signed with other news agencies, to increase the number of IINA correspondents so as to expand its area coverage, and to assign an annual prize to the best journalistic production the IINA receives from member agencies.

The director of the Jordan News Agency, Petra, office in Baghdad represented the agency, to the meetings.

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NATIONAL NEWS IN BRIEF

INTIFADA RALLY: A speech rally was held Friday at the Grand Mosque in Irbid marking the second anniversary of the intifada. Addressing the audience, Lower House of Parliament Deputies, Dr. Ahmad Al Kofahi and Sheikh Abdul Rahim Al 'Kour reviewed the stages the intifada has gone through and stressed the role it played in nullifying Israel's claims with regard to the so called alternative homeland. They also underlined the intifada's role in confirming the Palestinian people's identity (Petra).

RAINFALL PRAYERS: Rainfall prayers were held Friday in various parts of the Kingdom at the request of the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs. Addressing worshippers who performed the prayers, Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Faqr called on citizens to abide by Islam in words and deeds so that the Almighty would respond to their prayers (Petra).

NRA OUTLINES PLANS: Natural Resources Authority (NRA) Director-General Kamal Jreisat has outlined NRA plans to develop and encourage investment in Jordan's raw minerals sector in order to increase local production and export minerals. Addressing a seminar on volcanic raw eruptions Thursday, Jreisat called for increased research and economic feasibility studies in the field (Petra).

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH COURSE: Health Minister Mohammad Addoub Al Zaben Thursday met with participants in a course on occupational health held in Amman and exchanged views with them on the course's topics. Participants stressed the importance of such courses and said they contributed to promoting and enhancing knowledge (Petra).

T. GARGOUR & FILS (L.L.CO.) (SHIPPING) ANNOUNCES

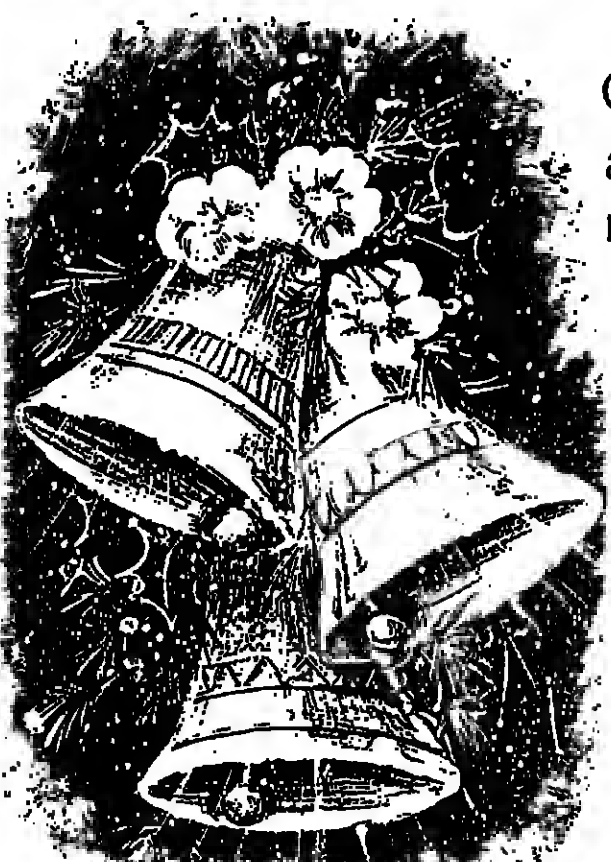
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Da'ssan Commercial Centre — 4th floor
Telephone numbers: 690626/29
690760/62
Fax number: 690512**

Our postal address, cable address and telex numbers remain unchanged.

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for the
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**Merry Christmas
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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

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A step in the right direction

THE RESTORATION of full diplomatic relations between Syria and Egypt Wednesday was a bit of anti-climax as all indicators during the past many months were pointing in the direction of such an inevitable return to normalcy between them. After inviting Cairo to attend the last Arab summit at Casablanca in May of this year, it became a foregone conclusion that Egyptian-Syrian relations will be resumed at the highest level. In other words the process that made the restoration of full diplomatic relations between the two countries imminent began a long time ago and was in fact triggered by the Jordanian initiative to reintegrate Cairo into the Arab fold. And the projected Mubarak-Assad summit in January becomes the culmination of this process and the vindication of the old Middle East truth which states that without Egypt the Arab World cannot wage war against Israel and without Syria it cannot sue for peace with the Zionist state. Seen against this backdrop, the restoration of status quo ante between Cairo and Damascus will enhance the Arab bargaining position with Israel immensely and could very well end up being the very catalyst that could bring the Israelis and the Arabs to the negotiating table on solid grounds. No wonder Israel is all hot and bothered by the return of normalcy to the Syrian-Egyptian relations, for their biggest fear is real negotiations that could force them to strike an equitable deal.

What will complete the chain of Arab cooperation and coordination is of course the resumption of full diplomatic relations between Damascus and Baghdad. One may presume that in the wake of the restoration of Syrian-Egyptian relations on all fronts, the next logical and natural step is to put the Syrian-Iraqi doubts as well as on the right and brotherly course. No doubt Egypt will put its full weight behind such a positive development. There is no better way to crown the entire process of restoring inter-Arab relations to their natural and brotherly levels than to have Syrian-Iraqi relations also reintegrated into the burgeoning Arab relations.

But it is one thing to have diplomatic relations and it is quite another to have fraternal relations governing the inter-Arab relations on all fronts. What Cairo and Damascus need to do most is to translate their newly found relations into synchronised and coordinated policies with regards to all the conflicts that the Arab World faces and will face in the new world that is emerging all around them. It goes without saying that on top of the list of such issues and conflicts is the broader Arab-Israeli conflict that is still awaiting a meaningful resolution. Maybe now, in the wake of restorations of Arab relations, is the time after all when Israel will begin to talk real business with the Arab parties to resolve the Palestinian question and the other dimensions of the Arab-Israeli conflict. Any eventual change in the Israeli stance towards the Palestinian conflict in the wake of the improvement in the inter-Arab relations would be the best test of the meaning and significance of the restoration of the Egyptian-Syrian relations.

JORDAN PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i Friday commented on the outcome of the joint Jordanian-Iraqi Higher Committee meetings in Amman, describing it as very successful. The meeting and the constant coordination of efforts between the two countries in all fields represent a form of cooperation that should be copied by other Arab states, the paper noted. The paper referred to the new trade protocol amounting to \$800 million during the coming, and the two countries' determination to link their national grids and land transport networks as part of the on-going process towards full integration between the two Arab neighbours. Indeed the new protocol for the coming year, constitutes further momentum to the Jordanian-Iraqi endeavour to serve higher Arab interests, the paper added. The paper expressed deep satisfaction with the outcome of the committee meetings and said that thanks to the efforts of the two leaderships in Baghdad and Amman, the two countries are truly oriented towards full unity, paving the way for a greater pan-Arab unity.

A columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily casts a gloomy outlook on the impact of changes now going on in Eastern Europe on the scene in the Middle East region. Fahd Al Faneek says that the deep rooted changes in Europe are bound to bring about an end to Communist rule and to render Eastern European countries in bad need of help from the West especially from the United States. The writer notes that such assistance could be linked to the Communist countries allowing more Jews to emigrate to Israel, thus creating congestion in the Jewish state, justifying any another war of expansion against the Arabs. The writer also notes that the Eastern European countries, especially the Soviet Union, will not consider the Arab countries as allies while the Western European nations will turn their attention towards helping their European kinsmen. He says that Moscow's increased reliance on the West for assistance would force that superpower to leave the Middle East arena to the United States, allowing it to impose its will on the Arab nation.

Al Dustour daily Friday paid tribute to the government of Prime Minister Mudar Badran for setting up a committee to erase the adverse effects of Jordan's decision to sever ties with the West Bank. The paper said that this step came at a time when the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship is witnessing a further boost, largely due to the close cooperation to serve the common interests. The paper said that the government's decision to provide further facilities to the Palestinian people and to help the West Bankers to market their products here and in Arab states and to give facilities at the bridges across the River Jordan will no doubt give impetus to the ever growing move towards further cementing the strong ties between Jordanian and Palestinian people in all fields.

1989 saw collapse of Communist rule in Eastern Europe

By Patrick Worsnip
Reuters

LONDON — In 1989 Communist rule collapsed in Eastern Europe, raising hopes that the cold war was finally dying away but also disrupting the East-West balance that had kept a chilly peace for 40 years.

The breaking open of the Berlin Wall in November was for many the crowning image of a year that saw the improvement of U.S.-Soviet relations consolidated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and incoming U.S. President George Bush.

After a superpower summit in Malta at the beginning of December, Gorbachev said: "We stated, both of us, that the world is leaving one epoch of cold war and entering another epoch."

The new Soviet policy of cooperation with Washington to cool regional trouble spots had effects right across the globe, with Moscow and its allies withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, Cambodia and Angola.

But even the superpowers had no magic wand to wave away the deep-rooted feuds that fuelled local wars in many regions of the world.

In the Middle East, Central America and elsewhere, conflicts seemed almost as far from solution as before.

And the army of the world's poor continued to grow, with the global foreign debt reaching \$1.3 trillion and the newly emerging democracies of Eastern Europe joining Latin American and African countries in the queue for aid from the rich.

Events moved with bewildering speed after Gorbachev made clear at a Warsaw Pact summit in July that Moscow would no longer underwrite Communist regimes in its East European allies, reversing a policy in force for four decades.

With the Soviet prop pulled away, the East Bloc governments simply fell to pieces as increasingly confident populations demanded the political freedoms and economic prosperity they saw in their Western neighbours.

The rot set in Poland, where the Solidarity Trade Union movement humiliated the Communists in partly-free elections in June, then took control of the government in September under Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, a Roman Catholic activist.

In Hungary, the ruling party abandoned Communism in October and prepared for free elections in 1990. In East Germany Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria, mass demonstrations forced the old guard out of office and brought promises of free polls next year.

But some Communist governments dug their heels in. China's leaders, who had pursued a major economic reform policy in the 1980s, balked at political changes and sent in tanks to crush pro-democracy demonstrators on Peking's Tiananmen Square in June. The official death toll was about 300 but diplomats believe thousands may have died.

Romanian President Nicolae Ceausescu also tried to defend his brand of Communism by force and had troops open fire on protesters, killing thousands. But popular fury led to his overthrow and execution.

In Moscow, Gorbachev began to find himself outpaced by the East European changes he himself had prompted. He set limits to the economic scope of his ailing perestroika reform programme and said the Soviet Communist Party must retain its leading role.

But he faced increasing unrest among the country's numerous ethnic groups.

The Baltic republics of Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia steadily distanced themselves from Moscow, while in the south of the country more than 100 people were reported to have died in clashes between Armenians and Azerbaijanis over the enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

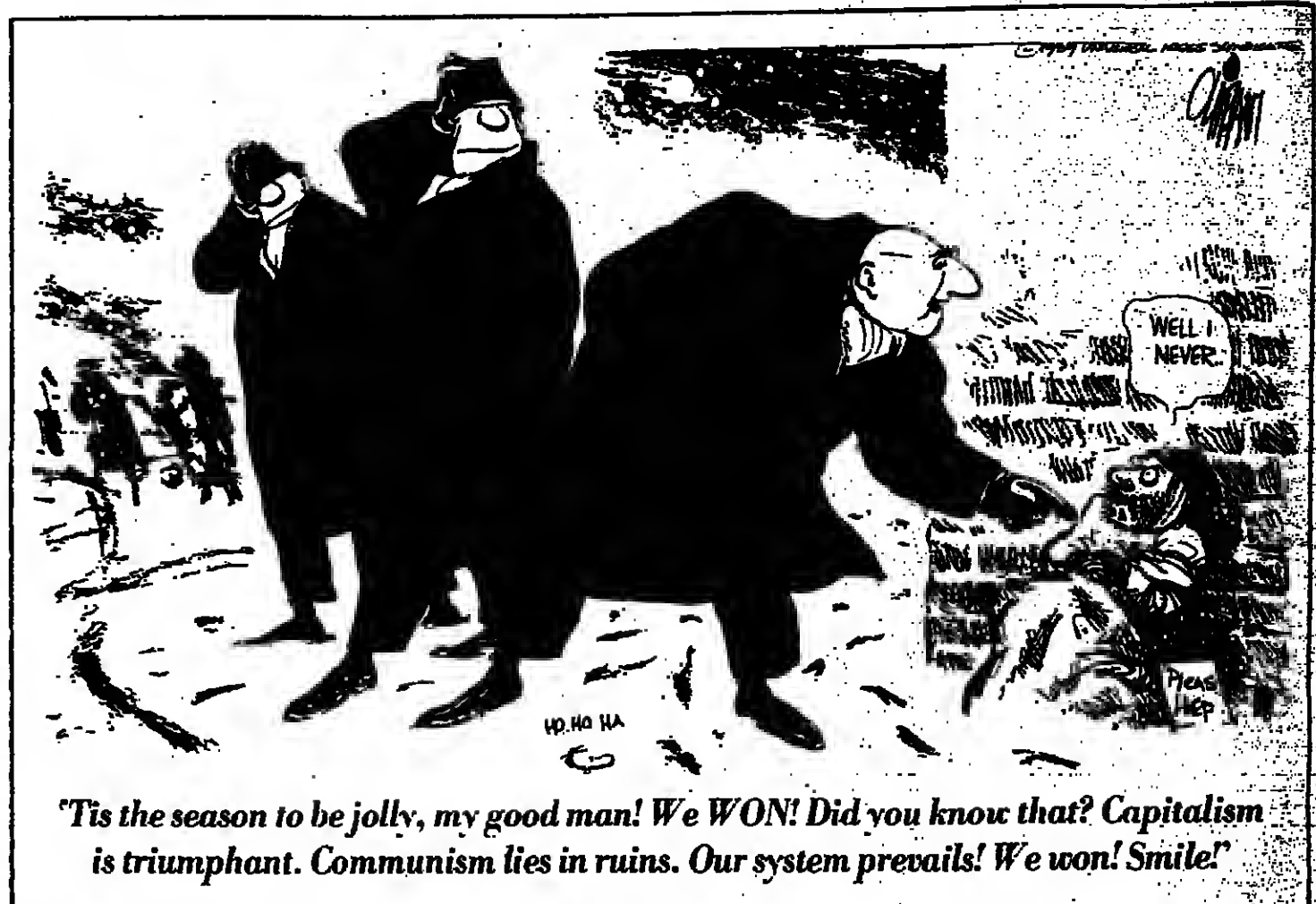
The eclipse of East European Communism, which American futurologist Francis Fukuyama said marked the "end of history," was welcomed in the West and beyond, but brought with it a new set of problems.

The Warsaw Pact appeared seriously undermined, and many in the West queried whether NATO too had outlived its usefulness.

But politicians from Gorbachev to British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher said the two alliances were still needed, at least as political groupings and a framework for arms control.

In March, NATO and the Pact began talks in Vienna aimed at cutting back the still huge numbers of troops and non-nuclear weaponry in Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals. They promised a treaty by late 1990.

At the heart of the problems facing the new Europe lay the newly revived German question, as the crumbling of the East-West divide led to calls for reunification.



"Tis the season to be jolly, my good man! We WON! Did you know that? Capitalism is triumphant. Communism lies in ruins. Our system prevails! We won! Smile!"

of the two Germanies. In Bonn, Chancellor Helmut Kohl launched a plan in November for confederation, but Germany's neighbours urged caution.

Although peace appeared to be breaking out in Europe, wars raged on elsewhere despite the Kremlin's new policy of ending its involvement in Third World conflicts.

In February, the last of 100,000 Soviet troops returned home from Afghanistan almost 10 years after they were sent there to support the Kabul government against Afghan rebels.

Western officials expected the Kabul government to fall after the Soviets left, but the U.S.-backed guerrillas were unable to score a quick victory.

Equally inconclusive was the 14-year-long civil war in Angola, even though Cuba steadily implemented a 1988 agreement to pull out its 50,000 troops helping the Marxist government against South African-backed UNITA guerrillas.

The upside of the agreement was that South Africa agreed to independence for neighbouring Namibia (South West Africa), which it had controlled for 74 years. Elections in November were won by the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) guerrilla group, which will assume power next April.

The independence of Namibia will leave South Africa as the only white-ruled country on the continent. But there too, new President F.W. de Klerk, who succeeded hardliner P.W. Botha in September, appeared to be moving towards an accommodation with the black majority.

In Asia, too, foreign troop withdrawals were in vogue. In September, Vietnam removed its forces which had been propping up the Cambodian government for 10 years, but Phnom Penh could reach no immediate political settlement with its guerrilla foes.

Some parts of the world seemed immune to improvements in superpower ties, notably the Middle East.

Some 850 people died in Lebanon in a new six-month flare-up of the civil war before the Arab League negotiated a ceasefire and persuaded the country's parliament to elect a new president, Rene Muawad, in November.

But he was assassinated after 17 days in office, and his successor Elias Hrawi, though supported by the Muslims, could not immediately impose his control over the Falangist sector.

In the Israeli-occupied territories a Palestinian uprising raged on into its third year and the death toll climbed over the 600 mark.

On the diplomatic front, a five-point U.S. plan for a peace dialogue was accepted in principle from Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, but the two sides imposed contradictory conditions.

The 1988 Gulf war ceasefire held through 1989 but peace talks between Iran and Iraq made no headway despite the death in

June of Iran's revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Islamic fervour was kept alive in Iran and elsewhere by Khomeini's "death sentence" in February on the Indian-born writer Salman Rushdie for his novel The Satanic Verses, which was deemed to blaspheme against the Prophet Muhammad.

In many parts of Latin America, violence remained a way of life even though military regimes continued to give way to democracy.

U.S. President Bush, seeking to establish a reputation for decisive action even at the cost of friction with Moscow, sent troops into Panama in December to oust strongman General Manuel Antonio Noriega and install a government under Guillermo Endara.

Elections in Chile in December brought victory to Christian Democrat Patricio Aylwin who will take over in March from General Augusto Pinochet, the country's ruler since his 1973 coup. But Pinochet can retain the armed forces command.

Fighting between the government and left-wing guerrillas continued in El Salvador, where rightist Alfredo Cristiani was elected president in March. In Nicaragua, hopes for an end to the war between the government and U.S.-backed contra rebels focused on elections scheduled for next February.

In addition to the violence, a major threat to democracy in Latin America remained the region's crushing foreign debt, estimated by the year's end at \$420 billion, about one third of the world total. Africa owed some \$200 billion.

But in 1989 a glimmer of hope emerged for the world's debtors. Western policy-makers began reluctantly to come round to the idea of debt forgiveness, and a plan launched in March by U.S. Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady encouraged banks to reduce loans in return for more secure bonds.

Third World debtors began to worry, however, that they could lose out again as the developed countries shifted resources to restore the economies of Eastern Europe, shattered by 40 years of central planning.

At the centre of the Western aid programme for Eastern Europe was the European Community, whose own plans to create a single internal market by 1992 began to be complicated by the prospect that East Bloc countries would seek to join.

By comparison with some of the worst years, 1989 was relatively free of major disasters. A serious earthquake damaged San Francisco in October but the death toll, originally feared to be in the hundreds, was eventually revised down to 67.

But amid growing concern over the pollution of the environment there was a major catastrophe for wildlife off the coast of Alaska when the tanker Exxon Valdez leaked 11 million gallons of crude oil into the sea.

East Bloc political upheaval produces poignant moments

By Susan Greenberg
Reuters

LONDON — One November weekend, a British television reporter interviewed Czechoslovak dissident emigre Jan Kavan in front of a seething, chanting crowd in Prague's Wenceslas Square. They both smiled at the irony of the moment.

A week earlier Kavan, a student leader during the 1968 "Prague Spring" or reforms, would have been slammed into jail just for setting foot in the country.

The reporter had often visited him in London for information about opposition in the East Bloc. Neither of them expected to meet in such changed circumstances.

Developments in East Europe have thrown up many unexpected, bittersweet moments like this.

Emigres have worked for years in a strange, sometimes hostile, world to keep human rights on the agenda. What will they do now their dreams are coming true? Will they return, dislocating their lives once more, or do they feel they still have a job to do abroad?

The question highlights a dilemma faced by such activists, as illustrated by the accounts of several people interviewed by Reuters.

Kavan, 43, was caught in the West when Soviet tanks rolled into Prague 21 years ago. Friends at home advised him to stay and help them from the outside. This led to the creation of Palach Press and the East European Cultural Foundation, which fostered links between East Bloc dissident movements.

When he walked through the Magic Lantern Theatre in Prague, where last month's revolt took shape, Kavan recognised many faces from the photographs of dissidents whose harassment he had publicised.

Like many emigres Kavan faces complications about national status and says he will now ask for reinstatement of his Czechoslovak citizenship, withdrawn in 1977. When he returned in November he was stopped and interviewed at the airport.

He hopes to return permanently "one day" but still sees a role in the West producing a comparative forum for debate.

"The changes will throw up important issues which haven't been discussed for a long time... there's not going to be unity, within East Bloc countries or between them."

Emigres have worked for years in a strange, sometimes hostile, world to keep human rights on the agenda. What will they do now their dreams are coming true? Will they return, dislocating their lives once more, or do they feel they still have a job to do abroad?

Gyorgy Krasso, a dissident activist and participant in Hungary's 1956 uprising, gained permission to leave his country in 1985 after the death of a relative. Soon afterwards he started the Hungarian October Information Service in London.

Like many emigres Krasso returned to Budapest in June for the reburial of Communist leader Imre Nagy, hanged for backing the 1956 revolt, whose rehabilitation marked a turning point in Hungary's reform process.

Krasso had to relinquish his British refugee status to return to Budapest and fight for a new, unrestricted, Hungarian passport. He is currently hopping between his young family in London and Budapest, where he recently ran in a by-election for the small Hungarian October Party.

The group is unpopular with both the ruling ex-Communists and the main opposition groups, of whom he is equally critical.

"When I first returned I felt touched — I thought I would not see my country again. But it was only a few hours before I felt completely at home," said Krasso, 57, in a telephone interview from Budapest.

"When I left it was not possible to conduct politics and I felt I could help spread information

a lost cause, he said in London.

Garztecki, 42, went back to Poland in November for the first time and hopes to commute between his old and new home. He feels less sure of finding recognition of his work back home than others such as Kavan, however, and feels a gap in shared experience with those who lived through martial law.

"People in Poland tell me, you had it easy living in a free, wealthy country. But there is no language to explain the emigre's feeling of loneliness."

While Czechoslovak dissident Vaclav Havel led efforts to remove the Communists from power in 1989, he was leading a bus bound from West Germany to Prague, full of Havel's writings.

The books, printed in West Germany, used to be smuggled into the country in the face of severe surveillance and fear of reprisal. This time they were going in with official approval.

Prečan's Documentation Centre for the Promotion of Independent Czechoslovak Literature, based in the Bavarian town of Scheinfeld, is helping Prague reprint 100,000 copies of the Black Book on the Soviet invasion which he co-edited shortly after 1968.

Like the others, however, he has had his share of problems since being forced to leave Prague in 1976.

"Emigration is a hard life," said Prečan by telephone from Bavaria. "We have a saying that every year as an emigre counts as two years at home."

Especially in the 1970s, when the West was seen by dissidents as ignoring human rights for the sake of détente, there was "a deep feeling that we were forgotten," he said.

"But now we are doing something to help ourselves, let us hope the rest of the world will come to help us too."

OPEN FORUM

A bird's eye view

In the continuous quest of the strange, the bizarre, the funny, the sad and, quite simply, the curious, the following were recently seen or experienced by yours truly:

— Gas stations in Jordan, and all over the world have no smoking signs plastered on every available wall space. This is not done because smoking is a health hazard but because a tiny spark near gasoline can make the whole station as well as the entire city block that it is in go up in smoke. Most people respect this danger and refrain from smoking for the five minutes it takes to fill up a car. I wish the same could be said for many of the attendants who work at these stations. So often you see an attendant filling a car with cigarette between his fingers or in his mouth. This is not smart, nor is it brave, it is down right dumb.

While at a gas station put your cigarette out (that goes for attendants as well) before you go up in a puff of smoke!

— From now on everyone who uses private hospitals in Amman should keep JD 200 tucked away in his pocket in case, God forbid, there is a medical emergency requiring hospitalisation. This is regardless whether the emergency can be treated in the Emergency Room, or one needs to be admitted into the hospital. The reason is that private hospitals will not even look at the patient unless the JD 200 deposit is paid in advance. What if the patient is having a heart attack or is bleeding to death? Well, if he dies it will be his fault for not thinking ahead and forgetting the deposit money. People in the medical profession used to take the Hippocratic Oath... Has it been transformed into the Hypocritical Oath?

— A few reminders that will put a damper on your New Year's Eve celebrations:

— Have you paid all your taxes?

— Did you forget to send a Christmas card to anyone?

— It is the time again to renew your membership in everything that you are a member of.

— The second term school fees are now due.

— Imported ground coffee is now JD5 a can.

— This used to be the time when your boss would be considering your pay raise. This year with the worsening economy it may be time to get ready for a "I won't even say hi."

Have a Happy New Year and may 1990 bring good health and prosperity to all!

Majid H.

L'Orient dans la musique classique occidentale

Mozart: de la source d'inspiration à la réflexion

L'Orient est devenu, aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, une source d'inspiration grandissante pour les musiciens occidentaux. Dans la lignée du "bourgeois gentilhomme" de Lully et Molière, c'est l'Empire Ottoman qui suscite chez les artistes un exotisme

haut en couleurs et peu soucieux d'exactitudes culturelles ou géographiques. Les opéras de Mozart reflètent ce goût, mais le transforment en réflexion philosophique sur les rapports entre l'Occident chrétien et l'Orient musulman.

Le rideau se lève sur le palais du Pacha Sélim, au bord de la mer. Sur la tour de garde, l'imposant Osman, chef du Harem, chante une complainte ironique: "La paix de ton cœur l'est double par Dieu, mais enfonce d'abord la femme!" Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart plante ainsi le décor oriental de "L'Enlèvement au Sérail", l'un de ses plus grands opéras. On sommes-nous exactement? Aucune indication de la période ne précise le pays où l'histoire Constantine est dépeinte, dans le majestueux palais dont le spectateur découvre les jardins pendant les scènes suivantes... L'action se situe donc quelque part dans l'Empire Ottoman, chez les Turcs, contrée devenue sur scène tout l'Orient imaginaire des Viennois du XVIII^e siècle.

Pour dresser une ambiance pittoresque, Mozart utilise les ingrédients musicaux d'un genre déjà codifié à son époque, qu'on appelait "Turquerie". Le plus souvent, l'effet recherché était comique: l'air d'Osman, qui ouvre "L'Enlèvement au Sérail", veut faire sourire de cette mystérieuse affectée, énoquée par une voix basse et maladroite. Pourtant, les personnages de Mozart vont bien

au-delà des caricatures de turcs bornés par lesquelles le théâtre se vengeait de l'angoisse réelle que l'Empire Ottoman faisait (alors) peser sur l'Autriche.

"L'Enlèvement au Sérail" met bien deux univers face à face, celui des valeurs du couple chrétien et celui du pouvoir musulman. Mozart démontre, dans son opéra, que les valeurs universelles du pardon et de la tolérance peuvent réunir ces deux mondes, presque ennemis de prime abord. Il faut remonter plus haut dans son œuvre, pour comprendre comment Mozart a fait de la confrontation entre l'Orient et l'Occident un enjeu philosophique que sa musique a si justement traduit.

Tous les apprentis pianistes ont joué la "Marche Turque", composée par un Mozart de vingt ans. Elle répondait à une mode qui touchait principalement Salzbourg, la ville natale du musicien. Mozart s'est amusé à transformer la main gauche du pianiste en grosse caisse énergique, et la main droite imite la percussion algide des triangles, alors que des parties plus virtuoses évoquent les contours sinueux des vents dont les Turcs se servaient dans leurs fanfares. Dans un ballet intitulé "Les

Jalousies du Sérail", composé en 1772, Mozart transpose à l'orchestre les mêmes couleurs sonores: les petites flûtes piccolo y jouent, avec les symboles, une danse effrénée.

Mais bientôt, Mozart songe à écrire un opéra dont l'action entière se déroulerait dans cet Orient exotique. En cela, il épouse le mouvement littéraire de son temps. Depuis les "Lettres persanes" de Montesquieu et les "Contes" de Voltaire, les raptus de belles princesses grecques et troyennes sont remplacés par les aventures survenant dans ce monde à la fois attirant et effrayant: celui des lointains (mais contemporains) Séraïls d'Orient.

Mozart fit à Paris, en 1779, une curieuse rencontre: un compositeur qu'il admirait beaucoup, Cambini, lui raconta son aventure. Il avait été enlevé par des corsaires de "barbares" (l'Afrique du Nord) et vendu comme esclave, avec sa fiancée, à un Sultan. Ils restèrent trois années en captivité. Au même moment, Mozart entreprend son premier opéra sur le thème de l'enlèvement: c'est "Zaide".

Allazim, renégat au service du Sultan Soliman, aide deux esclaves chrétiens à s'échapper du Harem. Rattrapés, ils sont condamnés à mort, mais un coup de théâtre révèle leur parenté avec Allazim. Le Sultan leur fait donc grâce, et dans le final de l'opéra sont proclamées ces paroles: "On trouve des âmes vertueuses non seulement en Europe mais aussi en Asie."

Cette leçon de tolérance est développée dans "L'Enlèvement au Sérail", composé en 1782. Un jeune homme espagnol, Belmonte, est venu supplier le Pacha Sélim de rendre la liberté à sa bien-aimée Constanze. Prédée d'un chœur de laïssances, Sélim apparaît et met Constanze à l'épreuve: il voudrait obtenir son amour, mais dans une autre scène il lui représente les tortures auxquelles il a pu voir de la soumettre...

Tout l'opéra montre le chemin de Sélim vers la dévotion et la grandeur d'âme. Pour mieux marquer cette évolution, Mozart a placé aux côtés du Pacha un serviteur borné, Omin, garde-chiourme sadique et bouffon. La morale du drame est plus subversive qu'il n'y paraît: Mozart l'élève à l'humanité que dépasse les antagonismes politiques (le père de Belmonte est l'ennemi juré du Pacha). Surmonte, il place la tolérance au-dessus de la religion chrétienne. Elle



L'exotisme oriental imprègne la littérature et la musique occidentales à partir du XVIII^e siècle.

devenir une valeur universelle de l'âme humaine.

L'ultime étape de cette philosophie se trouve dans "La Flûte Enchantée", le dernier opéra de Mozart. Une fois de plus, l'Orient est un lieu mal défini, mais qui s'apparente à l'Égypte pleine de sagesse et de symboles antiques. L'Égypte de la franc-maçonnerie. Dans la musique, il n'y a plus trace d'une quelconque "couleur locale". L'hymne à Isis et Osiris, entonné au 2^e acte par les prêtres de Zoroastre, est d'un hiératisme baute-mont spirituel.

L'Orient de Mozart transcende le cadre moral de la religion chrétienne, devient trop étroit. Sa musique lui fait prendre un sens philosophique universel, toujours apte à nous émouvoir. Jean-Christophe Marti.

EN BREF

Mort violente. L'autopsie du corps d'un Palestinien, décédé la semaine dernière dans la section des interrogatoires de la prison de Gaza, indique qu'il y a eu "mort violente", ont reconnu lundi les services médicaux israéliens. Khaled Sheikh, 27 ans, avait succombé cinq jours plus tôt dans une cellule d'isolement, après un interrogatoire par les services de sécurité du Shin Beth. Par ailleurs, des Israéliens, des Palestiniens et plus d'un millier de pacifistes européens ont décidé de former aujourd'hui une chaîne humaine autour des murailles de la Vieille Ville de Jérusalem, pour promouvoir 1990 comme "année de la paix" à Jérusalem.

Israël-Iran. Le ministre israélien des Affaires étrangères, Moshe Arens, a confirmé mardi le réachat par Tel Aviv de pétrole iranien. Washington avait annoncé le 19 et le 20 décembre avoir été informé du réachat mais s'était refusé à commenter les informations selon lesquelles cette transaction aurait eu pour objectif de faciliter la libération de prisonniers israéliens et d'otages américains au Liban. "J'ai été au courant de cet achat. Mais je n'ai pas voulu en parler pour ne pas compromettre le sort des prisonniers", a notamment déclaré Moshe Arens à un groupe de journalistes israéliens.

Cessez-le-feu, mais... Les formations chiites libanaises, Amal et Hezbollah, ont accepté de façon conditionnelle le cessez-le-feu souhaité par l'Iran alors que des engagements à la fois sporadiques et ponctuels ont été réalisés par les deux formations rivales du Liban Sud. Le mouvement pro-syrien Amal a décidé de respecter la demande d'arrêt des combats, mais sous réserve que le maintien de cette décision dépende du retrait des intégristes pro-iraniens du Hezbollah de deux villages qu'ils ont conquis ces derniers se sont engagés pour leur part à respecter le cessez-le-feu et se sont déclarés "prêts au dialogue", sans pour autant mentionner un retour à leur position d'avant les combats. Combats, qui depuis samedi dernier ont fait une cinquantaine de tués et une vingtaine de blessés.

Visite. Le premier ministre italien a quitté hier la capitale du Yémen du Nord à l'issue d'une visite officielle de 48 heures pour se rendre à Aden, au Sud-Yémen. Giulio Andreotti est le premier responsable politique européen à effectuer un séjour dans la région depuis que les deux pays ont entamé un processus de réconciliation. Le voyage du chef du gouvernement italien a été précédé mardi à Sanaa par le deuxième sommet inter-yéménite. Sommet, qui s'est achevé par la décision des deux capitales de "gracier" tout les détenus politiques dans le Nord et le Sud-Yémen. Une "amnistie générale" doit être prochainement proclamée, ont déclaré le président Saleh et le numéro un d'Aden, Ali Salem al-Baid.

Maghreb. L'Union soviétique se tiendra les 9 et 10 janvier prochains à Tunis, à l'occasion de la présidence tunisienne de l'Union du Maghreb arabe (UMA). M. Ali Aïmeur, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, a indiqué mercredi le ministre tunisien des Affaires étrangères, Abdelhamid Escheikh. La présidence de l'UMA, qui est assurée depuis sa proclamation en février dernier à Marrakech par le roi Hassan II, doit passer en janvier au chef de l'Etat tunisien, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, selon une procédure annuelle de présidence tournante.

Beckett. L'écrivain irlandais Samuel Beckett, Prix Nobel de littérature 1969, qui s'est éteint vendredi dernier à Paris à l'âge de 83 ans, a été enterré mardi dans la capitale française. Né en 1906 près de Dublin, Beckett avait été l'ami de James Joyce et de Sartre, avant de devenir un écrivain de renommée mondiale avec sa pièce "En attendant Godot" (1952), traduite en 40 langues. Romancier, dramaturge et poète, il a traduit lui-même la plupart de ses œuvres de l'anglais au français, dont "Sourires", son dernier récit paru le mois dernier. Beckett a été inhumé, dans la plus stricte intimité, au cimetière Montparnasse.

Grogne. Les événements sanglants de Roumanie ont relancé la contestation interne du sein du Parti communiste français (PCF), où les opposants ont publiquement demandé mardi la démission du secrétaire général, Georges Marchais, 69 ans et à la tête du PCF depuis 1972, s'est à leurs yeux "disqualifié" par son attitude à l'égard du PC de Roumanie. Estimant que "la direction du PCF n'ignorait pas la réalité du régime roumain", trois anciens dirigeants du parti, dont Marcel Rigout, ancien ministre, ont souligné que "Georges Marchais ne pouvait ignorer qu'il était l'hôte d'un bourreau", quant à l'ancien secrétaire "du Nord de la mer Noire". Ce dernier a répondu jeudi qu'il n'avait "pas du tout envie de partir" de son poste.

Attentat. La voiture de Georgina Duflo, déléguée générale à la lutte contre la drogue en France, ainsi que celle de son mari, ont essuyé plusieurs coups de feu le week-end dernier, devant leur domicile à Nîmes (Sud-est de la France). Mme Duflo, 46 ans, ancienne ministre socialiste, et sa famille, qui se trouvaient alors chez eux, n'ont pas été inquiétées. Cette action, qui n'a fait aucune victime, n'a pas été revendiquée.

Projet. Le ministre soviétique des Affaires étrangères a estimé jeudi que le développement de l'intégration économique entre l'Est et l'Ouest européens pourrait conduire un jour à la création d'une "zone économique" réunissant toute l'Europe. Dans une interview au dernier numéro de la revue soviétique "Tropiques Nouveaux", le ministre des Affaires étrangères a souligné que l'intégration des économies des pays de l'Est et de l'Ouest était "en cours". "Si ce processus se poursuit de façon intensive, a-t-il souligné, il sera possible de parler à un certain moment d'une zone économique pan-européenne". Le chef de la diplomatie soviétique a par ailleurs estimé qu'il fallait "s'efforcer de dialoguer entre les structures européennes, politiques et économiques".

Unanimité. L'écrivain Václav Havel, 53 ans, a été élu à l'unanimité hier à l'âge premier président non communiste de la République tchécoslovaque. Il a été élu à 41 ans par le Parlement. Candidat unique au scrutin, sa présidence sera électorale jusqu'à l'élection d'une nouvelle Assemblée au suffrage universel "libre" l'été prochain. La veille, Alexander Dubcek, leader du "Primoisme de Prague" de 1968, avait été nommé président du Parlement.

Roumanie. L'ancien chef d'Etat et du Parti communiste roumain, Nicolae Ceausescu, 71 ans, et sa femme Elena, 70 ans, ont été condamnés à mort et exécutés lundi dernier à Bucarest. Jugés par un tribunal militaire exceptionnel, ils ont été accusés de "génocide", pour avoir fait tuer plus de 60.000 personnes depuis le semaine dernière, de "noyautage de l'Etat", de "vol et destruction de biens publics" et de "tentative de fuite". L'armée, qui contrôle Bucarest, affrontait toujours hier soir des éléments isolés de la sécurité (police politique) dans plusieurs régions du pays.

Import. La société publique d'exportation de RDA, Liner-Ban Export-Import, a été chargée de la vente de morceaux du mur Berlin, a annoncé mercredi son directeur, Peter Pannschmidt. Le produit de cette vente est exclusivement destiné à des fins humanitaires, dont l'amélioration du système de santé, a-t-il indiqué.

Appel. L'Ethiopie accuse un déficit de 1,1 million de tonnes en céréales et a besoin d'une aide alimentaire massive et immédiate pour éviter une grave famine, a affirmé mercredi l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture. Selon une récente enquête de la FAO, la sécheresse a réduit les récoltes de 80% en Erythrée et de 50% au Tigré (provinces du nord du pays). "Seul un important effort d'aide internationale évitera beaucoup de morts dans les prochains mois", a averti la FAO.

Cancer. Le cancer figure au premier rang des causes de mortalité en Chine, où 900.000 personnes meurent d'une forme ou d'une autre de cette maladie chaque année, a révélé mardi le quotidien officiel en langue anglaise "China Daily". Les nombres des décès dus au cancer devraient encore progresser au cours des prochaines années en raison de la pollution atmosphérique, du tabagisme et du vieillissement de la population, estime Chen Miaolan, responsable de l'Association nationale contre le cancer.

Découverte. Les vestiges d'un relais de poste romain, véritable "station service" comprenant parking et motel, ont été découverts sur le chantier d'une intersection entre deux routes nationales, près de Cambridge au nord de Londres. Les archéologues ont mis à jour de nombreux os de chevaux, des poteries et des pièces de monnaie du III^e siècle. Cette aire de repos se trouvait sur la voie romaine "Hermine", qui reliait Londres à Peterborough et York.

Pean. Une entreprise du nord-est de l'Angleterre, renommée pour sa production de saumons fumés, a l'intention de commercialiser la peau des poissons, qui, une fois traitée et tannée, se révèle selon les spécialistes un excellent cuir de maroquinerie. Selon l'un des directeurs de l'usine de Neil Robson et Keith Taylor, le "cuir de saumon" ressemble à la vachette et sent pas le poisson. A l'en croire, cette production évitera non seulement d'avoir à jeter des volumes considérables de marchandises, mais elle permettra aussi à des nombreux saumons et serpens de sauver... leur peau.

A L'AFFICHE

CINEMA
Ciné-club. Séances à 13h00, 15h00, 17h00, 18h30 et 20h00. Nouveau film. le lundi à 20h00. projection pour les jeunes, le jeudi à 15h00.
Samedi 30 : Molluscs, Midshipman express, Pink Floyd, the wall, Birdy, Angel heart, Dances 31 : Working girl, The accused, Mississippi burning, Gorillas in the mist, Moonstruck.
Dimanche 1 : Ex Dieu créa la femme (USA), the fog, Halloween, Christine, Blood poet society.
Mardi 2 : Elvira, Blade runner, Escape from New York, Prince of darkness, They live, Mercredi 3 : Friends for life et tire toi, Flys again, Sam, The front, Love and death, Hanna et ses secrets.
Jeudi 4 : Bananas, Midnight sixth comedy.

TELEVISION
Silence, on tourne. 50 années de cinéma français, racontées par Jean-Pierre Maury et Raphaël Badaro, et illustrées par de nombreux extraits de films. Cette semaine: les femmes cinéastes (Yannick Bellon...)
JTV, dimanche 31 décembre à 19h15.

Les premiers effets de la libéralisation

Soulagement et réintégrations

Alors que se poursuit la restitution des passeports confisqués dans le passé que se multiplient les déclarations du gouvernement, en faveur notamment de la libéralisation de la presse, et que se dessinent à l'Assemblée une troisième coalition "indépendante" auprès des blocs islamiste et de la gauche, les premiers effets de l'assouplissement de la loi martiale se font sentir dans le royaume.

"Où, ça y est. Désormais, je peux sortir du pays. Je peux me considérer comme un citoyen, comme tout le monde". Mohammed Khalil, 32 ans, fait partie des Jordaniens, qui depuis environ deux semaines, se voient restituer leurs passeports.

Mohammed se prépare à voyager en Syrie, avec sa famille, pour la première fois depuis sept ans. Mieux encore, l'émigration pour cette "opinion politique". "Nous" allons juste y passer quelques jours, pour nous sentir enfin libres".

Sa joie, une grande partie de la population du royaume la partage après la série de mesures adoptées par le gouvernement ces dernières semaines. Mesures, qui ont d'ores et déjà abouti à la démocratisation partielle de la vie publique dans le pays. Il s'agit de se promener aux alentours du département des passeports, à djebel Amman, pour se rendre compte du soulagement de milliers de Jordaniens, dont les papiers avaient

été confisqués par les services de sécurité.

La ne s'arrête pas le changement. Comme promis par le gouvernement de Moubarak Badran, l'assouplissement des lois d'exception, en vigueur depuis 1967, se traduit par des levées d'interdiction de travail. Ainsi pour Youssef Hourani, capiste de son emploi il y a six ans sur ordre des services de renseignements. Militant syndical et politique, il a obtenu le droit de reprendre son travail dans une banque et se déclare "heureux de retrouver ses vieux amis".

Nombreux sont ceux, qui comme lui recouvrent depuis quelques jours leur droit au travail, autrefois suspendu par le gouvernement militaire général, en vertu de la loi martiale. C'est le cas de personnalité tels Georges Hadadine, président de l'Association des géologues jordaniens; du docteur Said Hourani, de l'université de Jordanie; ou encore de Youssef Hayaneh, du ministère de l'Industrie et du

Commerce.

Sans parler des journalistes ou des écrivains: Badr Abdul Haq, Fakhri Kassar, Lamis Andou, Wafa' Amr et bien d'autres encore, peu à peu "réhabilités". Le processus ne fait que s'enclencher mais le ministre de l'Information, Ibrahim Izzedin, soulignait encore mercredi que la liberté de la presse et les libertés d'opinion ainsi que d'expression iront grandissant.

Pour d'autres enfin, le tournant opéré depuis novembre se traduit par un retour en Jordanie, après de longues années d'exil. Mohammed Loubadi, fait partie de ceux-là. A l'été, où il vient de rentrer après 18 ans d'absence, il reçoit quotidiennement des dizaines d'amis. Quelques uns ont même de chance, comme Majed Habboub, qui, lui, a été refoulé à la frontière syro-jordanienne, faute de papiers jordaniens.

Si plus rien ne les empêche de revenir dans leur pays, les exilés se gardent bien, pour la plupart, d'écouter. "Où, j'ai le passeport dans la poche, mais je n'ai pas de travail et la vie devient très dure", lance l'un d'eux. Une inquiétude face à la crise économique que ne peut évidemment effacer le soulagement de la démocratisation progressive du pays.

Suleiman Sweles.

Damas renoue avec le Caire

Un long processus

L'Egypte et la Syrie ont officiellement repris mercredi leurs relations diplomatiques. Cette décision, qui met fin à 12 ans de brouille entre Damas et le Caire, couronne un long processus de rapprochement et fait aujourd'hui de la Libye le seul pays de la Ligue arabe à n'avoir pas encore renoué avec l'Etat égyptien.

"Conscients des répercussions des événements internationaux sur le monde arabe et de la nécessité de réaliser une entente arabe globale, les gouvernements syrien et égyptien ont décidé de rétablir leurs relations diplomatiques". Annoncee mercredi à l'occasion de la visite à Damas du premier ministre égyptien, la réconciliation entre les deux pays est désormais officielle.

La normalisation des relations égypto-syriennes, rompues en 1977 par Damas après la visite à Jérusalem du président Sadate, aura cependant été longue et chaotique. Un premier réchauffement avait été enregistré au début de la décennie. En accordant au pouvoir dans une Egypte isolée, en 1981, Hosni Moubarak avait ordonné la fin de toute campagne de presse contre d'autres régimes arabes.

En 1983, la guerre entre l'Iran et l'Irak, le conflit libanais, ainsi que les relations contradictoires des deux pays avec l'OLP, devaient bloquer le processus de rapprochement. Le chef de l'Etat égyptien avait plusieurs fois condamné la politique du président syrien, qui l'invitait fréquemment à

"rompre les accords de Camp David".

Les relations entre les deux pays ne se sont améliorées sensiblement qu'au début de l'année. La Syrie a notamment levé son objection à la réintégration de l'Egypte au sein de la Ligue arabe. En échange de quoi, le Caire a accueilli sa position sur l'occupation d'une partie du Liban par les troupes de Damas.

Après une rencontre entre les deux chefs d'Etat en avril dernier à Casablanca, les signes de rapprochement se sont multipliés. Les ambassades arabes nationales ont ainsi repris au début du mois leurs liaisons régulières entre les deux capitales. Les visites officielles se sont succédées ces deux dernières semaines.

Avec le rétablissement des relations diplomatiques entre la Syrie et l'Egypte, tous les membres de la Ligue ont renoué avec le Caire, à l'exception de la Libye. Tripoli a cependant entrepris le développement de ses relations commerciales avec son voisin, depuis les deux rencontres Qaddafi-Moubarak d'octobre et de décembre. (D'après agences.)

Palestine

Premier ambassadeur nommé à Amman

L'Organisation de libération de la Palestine a nommé mercredi Al-Tayeb Abdel-Rahim ambassadeur de "l'Etat de Palestine" à Amman. Il s'agit de la première représentation diplomatique officielle établie depuis l'ouverture de la chancellerie au début de l'année 1989.

Un ministre plénipotentiaire, Ouan Khatib, était en effet chargé depuis janvier dernier des affaires de l'ambassade de Palestine en Jordanie. M. Khatib gardera son poste à Amman, a précisé l'OLP.

Al-Tayeb Abdel-Rahim est membre du Comité central du Fatah, la principale composante de l'OLP. Il occupait depuis un an le poste d'ambassadeur de Palestine à Belgrade. Il avait auparavant été délégué par l'OLP en Egypte puis en Chine.

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Former official sees Aqaba key to prosperity

Andy Capp



Brazil to maintain samba style

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Brazil, bidding to win a record fourth World Cup, are promising not to compromise their traditional eye-catching samba style of soccer which has won them millions of admirers.

The assurance comes from Sebastiao Lazaroni, the man given the assignment of restoring the prestige of Brazilian soccer by bringing next year's world championship title back to this soccer-mad country.

"People have been asking me if Brazil will change their style to win in Italy," Lazaroni told Reuters.

"To those who seem concerned, I've repeated over and over that a coach can never change the style of playing of Brazilian soccer. We hope to win in Italy playing samba soccer, as the Europeans like to call our style," he said.

Lazaroni insists, however, that the use of the libero will be part of his playing tactics.

"We have proved that the use of the libero has not necessarily

turned our team defensive. What's happening is that we have considerably improved our defence without losing our attacking power," Lazaroni said.

Since his decision to use the libero in the South American Cup in July, Brazil have only conceded three goals.

"After being trounced 4-0 by Denmark in a friendly in May, I became convinced that something had to change in our game plan. The libero was our answer. So far it has been working with enormous efficiency," Lazaroni said.

His main concern now is to find a way to have his players together as soon as possible for the World Cup preparations in April.

"We will select our players on April 16. It's possible that we'll have some trouble having players released from the Portuguese clubs," Lazaroni said.

"I'd say that if we were to choose the team today, we'd probably call 13 who are playing in Europe, out of the 22."

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ Q J 8 5 2
♥ A Q 4
♦ A 10 6
♣ 7 5

EAST
♠ 10
♥ J 10 9 7
♦ Q 5 3
♣ K J 8 2

SOUTH
♠ A K 9 6 3
♥ K 8 2
♦ K J 4
♣ A Q

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
2 NT Pass 5 ♠ Pass
3 NT Pass 6 ♠ Pass
6 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♠
The longest from most players we know is not holding enough high cards. But possession of too many honors can be deceiving, obscuring the best line of play. For proof in the pudding, here's a fine example. Once North jump raised spades (forcing), it was simply a matter of whether North-South reached a

small or grand slam. When Blackwood revealed a king was missing, South was satisfied to contract for 12 tricks.

Declarer won the opening heart lead, drew trumps, ending in dummy, and tried the club finesse. When that failed, the heart return was taken in the closed hand and declarer had to fall back on the diamond finesse. Since West had shown up with the king of clubs and jack of hearts, declarer decided to play East for the queen of diamonds. A diamond to the ace and a diamond back to the jack lost to the queen-down one.

Declarer was rather unlucky. However, had he been dealt a low club rather than the queen, he might have spotted the sure-fire line. Declarer should win the heart lead, draw trumps and then cash his remaining heart winners. Next comes the ace of clubs, followed by the queen. Declarer doesn't care a hoot which defender wins. Whoever is on lead must either play a diamond, removing a guess in that suit, or else give declarer a ruff-shuff, obviating the need for any diamond guess.



Al Faisali's 1st goal by Khaled Awad (Photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Al Faisali wins Jordan Cup

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Faisali Friday defeated Al Ramtha 2-1 to win the final of Jordan's Cup soccer championship. Al Faisali's Khaled Awad scored the first goal for his team in the 39th minute of the game which was held at Amman International Stadium under the patronage of Minister of Youth Ibrahim Al Ghababsheh and attended by His Royal Highness Prince Ali Ibn Al Hussein. Zeid Al Sharaa scored the equaliser for Al Ramtha in the 38th minute of the second half. Ziad Abu Shanab of Al Faisali scored the second goal in the 18th minute of the extra time. At the end of the game Ghababsheh distributed medals for members of both teams and Prince Ali Ibn Al Hussein presented the cup for Al Faisali's captain Millad Abbas, who also received the trophy of the best goalkeeper in the championship. The ideal player trophy went to Rafeed Al Daud of Al Ramtha.



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McEnroe still enjoying tennis

PERTH, Australia (AP) — John McEnroe is enjoying his tennis as much as ever, and feels under no pressure to regain his former world number one spot.

McEnroe, 30, is in Perth to represent the United States in the Hopman Cup exhibition teams tournament, part of his preparation for next month's Australian Open championship.

The three-time Wimbledon and four-time U.S. Open champion is still having fun doing what he does best.

"It's easy, that's why I do it," he said.

"It's the best job in the world to play sport for a living."

The abrasive New York left-hander has risen to fourth in the world but has yet to cap his comeback with a major title. He says it doesn't worry him too much.

He told a press conference Friday that he is beginning to see tennis for what it is — a game.

"In perspective with the real world, handling the pressure of playing tennis is as easy as pie," he said.

McEnroe and Pam Shriver are representing the United States in the Hopman Cup, named in honour of famous Australian coach and Davis Cup captain Harry Hopman, who assisted McEnroe when the American was in his teens.

The American duo face Italy in their opening match on Saturday. McEnroe said he would be playing mixed doubles for the first time in 11 years.



John McEnroe

"The idea of playing in something with Harry Hopman's name is intriguing," he said.

McEnroe first took the number one spot on the computer in March 1980. He last held top spot in 1983 but said it doesn't concern him if he never scales the mountain again.

"I can easily live without it," he said.

"I would like to take my game up to another level, take my ranking up a notch or two, but I don't really care about being number one."

McEnroe said he still felt under some pressure in grand slam tournaments.

"It's very difficult pressure-wise to win the majors," he said. "I feel I haven't handled the pressures as well as I did in the past."

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1989

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: A good day to spend planning various outlets of a broad and comprehensive nature that are important for your long term goals. Make time for errands and shopping.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Try to make arrangements to visit a friend at a distance. Discussing different topics at home will now bring more harmony there.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You now have new and more understanding friends in your social circle. Take your mate and together be with younger persons as much as possible.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A young couple can now bring a considerable amount of joy into your dwelling. You and your mate now see the way to have more happiness in your lives today.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) A friendly couple should now be wholeheartedly accepted into your circle of friends. You and your family would be wise to accept outside invitations now.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Going to new entertainments with good friends will bring much pleasure. Although dull, complete efficiency your home obligations.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You now have some good practical ideas for improving the value of your property. Get some new and improved furnishings for your home, to avoid confusion.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A venture if importance requires considerable more study before you commit yourself. Many persons in your home now can be very helpful to you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is your day to remember and to communicate with good friends at a distance. Much activity in your dwelling now should please you very much.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Invitations from prosperous persons are now in the offering for you. Be careful in travelling on the highway with your mate now.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 30) Your temptation to speed more than is wise should be sternly controlled. Give a practical present and encouragement now to your loved one.

AQUARIUS: (January 31 to February 19) Entertain confidential friends and advisors to your home today. Take your attachment with you at your social activities.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Don't be forced to act in a business matter by an impatient, demanding person. Don't take seriously your attachment's pre-set temporary mood.

Today's child: If your child were born today he or she will be one who will want to live a well-ordered kind of life, with many routines that have proven successful, which will be one of the secrets of their success. There is a lot of artistic ability in this chart and special care must be given so that proper expression is allowed.

"The stars impel, they do not compel." What you make of your life is largely up to you.

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Tender documents are obtainable against the payment of a non-refundable sum of JD 150 each from the Tenders Division at the Water Authority main office, Amman.

Bids are due at the Government Tenders Directorate/Ministry of Public Works and Housing not later than 1330 hours Jordan local time on Wednesday, 31/01/1990.

Eng. Saleem Oudah
Chairman of Central Tenders Committee
Director Government Tenders Directorate

THE Daily Crossword by Elizabeth Arbib

ACROSS

- Loose garment
- Ms Moreno
- Start
- Autism
- Patron
- Uplift
- podrida
- NCO
- Sargain
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- heaven
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- Mr. Casani
- Sales event
- Wide bright
5. Kin of umps
8. Sick
7. Inventor's monogram
8. Connect chiel
9. The blab
10. Me Chase
11. Shake — I
12. Glut
13. Arab rulers
14. Kin to beer
15. Football team
16. Divine
17. Revelations
18. Burn lightly
19. Puppeteer
20. Baird
21. Expend
22. Second-hand
23. stones
24. Pig food
25. Or, peak
26. Nab
27. Sacred writing
28. Russia, plane
29. Flu symptom
30. "Peter Pan"
31. dog
32. Rainbow
33. Say it isn't so
34. SAE word
35. Ono
36. Tire
37. Fill
38. Sweater size: abbr.

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LICENCE TO KILL
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NIJOUR
Mel Gibson & Darny Glover in
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PLAZA
LICENCE TO KILL
Performances 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

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PRAGUE (R)— Playwright Vaclav Havel, jailed for five years for his human rights activities and long denounced in the Communist media as an enemy of the state, was sworn in as president of Czechoslovakia Friday.

The election of Havel, 53, was agreed last Friday at roundtable talks between the Communist Party, the opposition movement

Havel succeeds orthodox President Gustav Husak who quit

The duties of the president are largely ceremonial but he has the power to dissolve the government



When last month's protests brought him onto centre stage from the wings to which he had been banished, the playwright remarked: "Life keeps surprising me, but it is this quality of unexpectedness and surprise that makes it beautiful."

Although officials refused to say how many police joined in the operation, the government-funded radio put the number at

Late Thursday, two fights broke out among Vietnamese boat people armed with home-made weapons.

Amritsar, about 25 kilometres to the south.
The Amritsar shrine was attacked by the army on June 3, 1984 to flush out Sikh extremists entrenched inside. Sikh militants

Deputy Inspector General of Police Gurinder Singh Bhullar said the fighting began after the extremists ambushed and killed the four policemen manning a picket outside the temple.

"It was a planned attack on our force," he said.

Ek Serewyath claimed the three-faction guerrilla coalition fighting the government now had

Seven of the dead were in the club and three others were killed by falling masonry and awnings in a nearby suburb of Newcastle, Australia's fifth largest city, 120 kilometres north of Sydney.

"There are threats, but the strength of the coup plotters is low. We are conducting patrols around Manila every evening to prevent collection from all these

Meanwhile, Aquino's controversial transportation and communications secretary resigned Friday, two days before a

Reyes's was among several cabinet posts observers believe were targeted in Mrs. Aquino's Dec. 31 revamp.

ic word

Pork trotters were one of the few meat items available. They were grimly nicknamed "patriots"—the pig's feet stayed in Romania while the rest of the carcass was sold abroad.

But now the people are streaming into shops to stock up for the New Year and start of a new decade in freedom. On Wednesday alone, Bucharest shops reported sell-

Sixty-year-old Maria Balanca burst into tears as she spoke

for something to buy," she added. "When we found something, we would push and fight like animals...now I can take chocolates home for my grandchildren."

ets of the Ceausescus."

Comaneci: Defection enraged Ceausescu

because I have freedom," she said. "But before the Romanians can enjoy their freedom, they need food, medical supplies, blankets."

Poland to have new police force

passed a new decree forbidding "gatherings, rallies or demonstrations" in the square without prior permission. The huge square, site of chairman Mao Tsetung's mausoleum and other Communist shrines, has been guarded

permission. The huge square, site of chairman Mao Tsetung's mausoleum and other Communist shrines, has been guarded

law forces since June.

Dog brings home hand grenade

LONDON (R)—A dog gave its owner something to bark about when it trotted home with a hand grenade in its mouth. Police in Birkenhead, northwest England, said they evacuated the house and six neighbouring homes while army experts spent two hours defusing the World War II device. They said the dog could have dug up the grenade from a garden or waste dump.

Stowaways nearly outnumber crew

SAN FRANCISCO (R)—A Colombian freighter, loaded with coffee and other goods, docked here with a crew of 24, nearly half its many stowaways, officials said. U.S. customs officials Rollin Klink said 21 stowaways, all young men, were discovered when authorities boarded the Ciudad de Buena Ventura. David Ilchert, local director of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, described them as Colombian dockworkers. He said the men were "not used to staying on the freighter when it leaves for its next destination, Canda, or else be flown back to Colombia." "I don't think the captain would relish the idea of leaving San Francisco with 20 young men who want to stay here," Ilchert said.

Tower of Pisa leans less in '89

PISA, Italy (AP)—The famous leaning Tower of Pisa shifted less this year than its average annual tilt of the last three decades, university technicians have said.

The inclination of the 54-meters tower was about 0.03 inches (0.8 millimeters), compared to an average 0.245 inches (1.19 millimeters) recorded over the past 30 years, the Italian News Agency ANSA reported.

"The measuring instruments are set for very small values, which show that the tower is slowing its fall," said Gero Geri, a topography professor who has been measuring the lean of the tower since 1969. His findings are reassuring to the shopowners, merchants and hoteliers who depend on the 800,000 tourists who clamber up the tower's spiral staircase every year.

Nonetheless, Pisa's mayor recently agreed to close the tower starting next month for temporary restoration work. The tower, begun by Romano Pisano, in 1173, started to lean almost immediately because the ground shifted underneath. The tower now tilts about four metres off the perpendicular, but tower experts say it will not topple for at least another century.

Public Works Minister Giovanni Prandini sparked an outcry this fall by sounding an alarm about the decay of the national symbol.

Stallone sues art broker

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Sylvester Stallone has sued an art broker for \$5 million, claiming the broker sold him 100 millions of dollars more than he should have for several artworks. The fraud and breach-of-contract suit charges that Barbara Guggenheim persuaded Stallone to pay \$1.8 million for a painting she told him was an excellent investment. After buying it sight unseen, the star of the Rocky and Rambo movies said he discovered that 25 per cent to 30 per cent of it had been restored or retouched and that its previous owner had tried for some time to sell it. Based on that painting, the suit charges, Stallone believes he also paid too much for several other works bought through Ms. Guggenheim.

Global weather

(major world cities)

	INDL.		MEXL.	
	° C	° F	° C	° F
AMSTERDAM	22	82	02	36
ATHENS	13	55	15	59
BAHRAIN	14	57	19	66
BANGKOK	24	75	32	90
BUSINESS AIRS	22	71	30	86
CAIRO	28	82	45	113
CHICAGO	00	32	15	59
COPENHAGEN	02	36	03	37
FRANKFURT	02	36	01	34
GENEVA	01	30	01	34
HONG KONG	16	61	18	64
ISTANBUL	03	37	09	48
LONDON	04	39	06	43
LOS ANGELES	14	57	19	66
MADRID	13	55	12	54
MEXICO	12	54	19	66
MONTREAL	-21	-06	11	52
MOSCOW	05	41	20	68
NEW DELHI	05	41	20	68
NEW YORK	-07	20	02	36
PARIS	-01	30	01	34
ROME	02	28	10	50
TOKYO	13	55	29	84
TOKYO	13	55	29	84
VIENNA	X	X	X	X

X indicates missing information.